KING LEAR.

SHAKESPEARE

KING LEAR

WITH

AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

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INTRODUCTION.

Date and Text of Play.

In all probability *King Lear* was written in 1605. At all events the limits lie somewhere between 1603, the date of Harsnet's *Declaration*, etc., to which the Third Act has several allusions, and 1606, when the Play was entered in the Stationers' Registers. By some it has been supposed that Gloucester's words (in i. 2) regarding eclipses are in allusion to the great solar eclipse of October, 1605, and that when speaking further of "machinations, hollowness, treachery," he is meant to point to the Gunpowder Plot of November 5th, 1605. The Quarto and the Folio texts differ very materially, there being in the former about two hundred and twenty lines that are not in the latter, and fifty lines in the latter that are not in the former. This discrepancy has given rise to much interesting discussion as to the author of the excisions, as to whether they were systematic or accidental, and, if systematic, whether the object was to shorten the play for acting purposes or to emphasize dramatic effects. Space will not allow me to give more than the briefest summary of the conclusions to which some of the most eminent Shakespearean critics have come. Knight holds that Shakespeare himself systematically revised the Quarto with a view to heighten the

dramatic action; and Staunton seems to lean towards the same conclusion in accepting the fact that the additions to the Folio were undoubtedly Shakespeare's own. Delius, on the other hand, after going into the matter with the greatest minuteness, holds that the omissions were made by the players in order to shorten the play in acting, and that we have no evidence whatever of Shakespeare's revision. On this latter point Schmidt agrees with Delius. Koppel maintains that it was Shakespeare's own hand that cut out passages both in the Quarto and the Folio texts, and comes to this general conclusion, that "The *original* form was, essentially, that of the Quarto, then followed a *longer* form, with *the additions in the Folio*, as substantially *our modern editions have again restored them;* then the shortest form, as it is preserved for us in the Folio."

Source of the Plot.

For the bald outline of the main plot of his Play Shakespeare may have gone to any one of many sources; for the story in a rough shape is told, among others, by Geoffrey of Monmouth, by Layamon, by Robert of Gloucester, by Spenser, by Holinshed. In the opinion of some modern editors it is to the last that we must look as the most likely original; but it seems more probable that, as Furness suggests, the direct source was the *Chronicle History of King Leir* dramatized, according to Malone and Halliwell, in 1593 or 1594. The underplot of Gloucester and his sons is moulded on the story in Sidney's *Arcadia* of "the Paphlagonian unkind king, and his kind son, first related by the son, then by the blind father."

Outline of the Play.

After a long reign, weary of the cares of state, Lear, who has no male heir, determines to divide his kingdom

among his three daughters, and this division is the subject of conversation between the Earls of Kent and Gloucester at the opening of the Play. Lear enters accompanied by Goneril and Regan, married respectively to the Dukes of Albany and Cornwall, and Cordelia, for whose hand the King of France and the Duke of Burgundy are suitors. The several portions have apparently been determined on already; but Lear foolishly imagines that before announcing the division he may, by calling on his daughters to express the measure of their love to him, ascertain which best deserves the largest recompense. Goneril and Regan, rivals in every kind of heartlessness and depravity, vie with each other in the profession of extravagant devotion to their father. When, however, it is Cordelia's turn to speak, she has no more to say than that she loves her father as a child should do. In an outburst of fury, Lear declares that such a child shall have nothing from him. That which he had intended as her share shall be divided equally between Goneril and Regan, with whom, attended by a hundred knights, he will pass the few remaining days of his life, the guest of each for alternate months. Kent, his faithful counsellor, who rightly reads the character of the three daughters, attempts the defence of Cordelia, only thereby to bring down upon himself the sentence of banishment from the kingdom. At this point the King of France and the Duke of Burgundy come upon the scene. The latter, learning that Cordelia has been cast off by her father and is now dowerless, withdraws his offer of marriage; while France, learning the cause of Lear's displeasure, all the more eagerly presses his suit, and winning Cordelia's

assent, shortly afterwards departs with her for his own country. In the next Scene we have the first beginnings of the underplot. Edmund, Gloucester's illegitimate son, is intriguing to deprive his legitimate brother, Edgar, of his succession to his father's rights and dignities. As that father enters, he pretends to hide away a letter he is reading. His attempt at concealment rouses the suspicions of Gloucester, who demands to have the letter shown him. Though a forgery of Edmund's, it is at once accepted by Gloucester as coming from Edgar, and its purport is to persuade Edmund to join him (Edgar) in a plot to murder their father and share his possessions between them. Pretending to shield his brother, Edmund contrives to strengthen Gloucester's belief in his son's guilt, and finally promises to sound Edgar as to his meaning, and acquaint his father with the result. Soon after Gloucester's exit, Edgar enters. Edmund manages to prevent any meeting between him and his father by persuading the former that the latter is deeply incensed with him, and that his life is in danger. After an interval of something less than a fortnight, during which Lear has been staying with Goneril, we find that she has already begun to weary of her father's presence, and is determined to make an opportunity for quarrelling with him. Just as she has laid her plans for this purpose, Kent, who instead of leaving the country has disguised himself as a menial servant, comes to her Castle, and Lear, who has been out hunting, returns to dinner. Taking a fancy to Kent's appearance and manner, he engages him as one of his retinue. Shortly afterwards Goneril enters and puts her plan into execu-

tion by bitterly scolding her father for the unruly behaviour of his attendants, which she pretends has been countenanced by him. Her angry and scornful language so wounds Lear that he determines to leave her in order to take up his abode with Regan; and sending Kent on before him to announce his coming, he sets out on his journey. The Second Act opens at Gloucester's Castle. Here Edmund craftily induces Edgar to take to flight; and on the entrance of Gloucester represents that his own life has been attempted by his brother because he refused to share in his parricidal designs. Gloucester, credulously accepting the fiction, resolves to disinherit Edgar and to get him proclaimed an outlaw, making Edmund heir in his place. He has just come to this decision when Regan and Cornwall, who had left their home in order to avoid receiving Lear, come to claim his (Gloucester's) hospitality for a time. Their arrival is followed by that of Kent, and of Goneril's steward, Oswald, with letters for Regan. The two meeting, fall into an altercation, and Regan coming upon the scene orders Kent to be put in the stocks. In this plight he is found shortly afterwards by Lear, who has followed Regan to Gloucester's Castle. His reception by her is, however, very different from what he had expected, for so far from sympathizing with him in his grievances against Goneril, she altogether takes her sister's side in the quarrel. While the discussion is at its height, Goneril, who has determined to concert measures with her sister as to the treatment of their father, makes her appearance. Together they heap upon him every indignity of contempt, demanding as a condition of receiving him, that he shall reduce the number of

his attendants from a hundred to fifty, from fifty to twenty-five, and finally that he shall dismiss them all, contenting himself with the attendance of their servants. This is too much for Lear, and though the time is night and a terrible storm is raging without, he chooses rather to submit himself to its violence than to remain the guest of such unnatural children. Exposed to its inclemency, and attended by no one but his Fool, we find him in the next Act on the verge of madness, and before long a complete maniac. In this condition he is joined by his faithful Kent, while Gloucester, who endeavours to succour him in his misery, has his eyes put out by the vindictive Cornwall, and is driven from his own Castle. Wandering forth, he is met by his outlawed son, Edgar, who to escape capture has taken upon himself the disguise of a madman, and by him is guided to Dover. Meanwhile Cordelia, having heard of her father's cruel wrongs, is on her way from France with an army to restore him to his throne; and to meet the invading forces, the two sisters are mustering their troops. Shortly after her landing, Cordelia obtains information as to her father's whereabouts, and every means that the skill of medicine can suggest is employed in an endeavour, partially successful, to cure him of his madness. The next event of importance is the engagement between Cordelia's army and the joint forces of Goneril and Regan, in which Cordelia is defeated and taken captive with her father. Edmund, who in the battle had led Regan's troops, and who now is to become her husband—Cornwall having been slain by a servant in horror at his atrocity towards Gloucester—is suddenly arrested by Albany on a charge of capital treason. His

accuser, who proves to be Edgar in disguise, comes forward to maintain his charge in single combat. Mortally wounded, Edmund not only admits the accusations brought against him, but confesses that he has secretly given orders for the execution of Cordelia and Lear. His confession comes too late to save the former, for at this moment Lear enters bearing her dead body in his arms, and himself expires shortly afterwards, his old heart broken by this climax of his many sufferings. Meanwhile Edmund, Goneril, and Regan have all come to a miserable end; he from the wound received in his combat with Edgar, Regan from poison administered by Goneril, who also was in love with Edmund, and Goneril, in her despair, by her own hands. Gloucester, too, has passed away, dying like his master of a broken heart, though not before discovering that Edgar's treachery was the fabrication of Edmund's malice; and of the principal personages there remain alive only Albany, Kent, and Edgar.

The chief characters: Lear.

In the case of others of Shakespeare's personages so far as we fail to form to ourselves an adequate conception of their character, the fault lies in our own want of perceptive capacity. With Lear it is different. For from first to last we see him only in a state of mind that is more or less diseased. We can, no doubt, even under this cloud discern a good deal of what he was before this cloud fell upon him. We can see that his mind was one of extraordinary vigour, that his nature was headstrong and imperious, though with a considerable admixture of tenderness and generosity, that his rule had been despotic, and that fear rather than love inspired the behaviour of those about him. But we have no actions done in his

saner days by which to judge him; and if we accept the idea that at the outset of the Play he is nothing more than a vain weak old man whose shallow mind and feeble power of judgement pass into frantic insanity in consequence of the cruel treatment he receives at the hands of his unnatural daughters, the first acts of the drama can be regarded only as a gross improbability. This improbability is at once got rid of if we recognize that from the moment we first see him his mind is in a state of unsoundness, needing only provocation and suffering to make it acute. Holding this view as set forth by Bucknill with such admirable clearness and force, I think that I cannot do better than summarize his account of the development of the disease. Starting from the point of view that Lear's trial of his daughter's love is a mere "silly trick," as Coleridge characterized it, Bucknill asks,* "Does it not lead us to conclude that from the first the king's mind is off its balance; that the partition of the kingdom, involving inevitable feuds and wars, is the first act of his developing insanity; and that the manner of its partition, the mock-trial of his daughter's affections, and its tragical denouement, is the second, and but the second act of his madness? The great mind, so vigorous in its mad ravings, with such clear insight into the heart of man that all the petty coverings of pretence are stripped off in its wild eloquence, not only is unable to distinguish between the most forced and fulsome flattery and the genuineness of deep and silent love; it cannot even see the folly of assuming to apportion the three exact and predetermined thirds of the kingdom according to the professions made in answer

* *The Mad Folk of Shakespeare*, pp. 174 *et seq.*

to the 'silly trick'; cannot even see that after giving away two-thirds, the remainder is a fixed quantity which cannot be more or less according to the warmth of the professions of his youngest and favourite daughter; a confusion not unlike the account he subsequently gives of his own age—'fourscore and upwards; not an hour more or less' ... Lear's treatment of Kent; his ready threat in reply to Kent's deferential address, which, in the words of true devotion, only looks like the announcement of an expostulation; his passionate interruptions and reproaches; his attempted violence, checked by Albany and Cornwall; and finally the cruel sentence of banishment, cruelly expressed; all these are the acts of a man in whom passion has become disease. In the interview with France and Burgundy the seething passion is with difficulty suppressed by the rules of decorum and kingly courtesy. To Cordelia's entreaty that Lear would let the King of France know the simple truth of his displeasure, only the savage reply is given—

'Better thou
Hadst not been born, than not to have pleased me better';

and he casts out his once loved daughter—the darling of his heart, the hope of his age—without his grace, his love, his benison." Adverting to the subsequent altercation between Lear and his daughter Goneril, Bucknill is of opinion that "at this time his conduct is thoroughly beyond his control. He is beside himself and insane ... He is conscious of his mental state, and even of its cause. He feels the goad of madness already urging him, and struggles and prays against it, and strives to push it aside. He knows its cause to be unbounded passion, and that to be kept in temper would avert it.

> 'O, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven!
> Keep me in temper: I would not be mad!'"

Criticizing the latter interview with Regan, Bucknill notices the want of all settled purpose and definiteness of resolve, which mark Lear's behaviour: "This flightiness of thought, this readiness to take up a subject strongly, and to lay it down again lightly, to run from one subject to another, and still more, from one temper to another, is a phase of mental disease approaching that which is called incoherency ... Lear, however, is not yet incoherent; he is only approaching that phase of the malady. He has entirely lost that obstinate resolve, which his heady and passionate will gave him at the commencement. He is flighty, even on subjects of the most dire moment to him. He takes up and lays down his determination with equal want of purpose. This is evident in his hasty references to the treatment which Kent has met with from the 'fiery duke' and Regan. This flightiness of thought is accompanied by a rapid and undirected change of emotion, a still weightier evidence of the mind's profound malady. This is strongly marked in the speech to Goneril, whom, in eight lines, he addresses in four different tempers: irritation; sadness, with some memory of affection; followed by an outburst of rage and hate; and again by desire and effort to be patient:

> 'I prithee, daughter, do not make me mad:
> I will not trouble thee, my child; farewell:
> We'll no more meet, no more see one another:
> But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my daughter;
> Or rather a disease that's in my flesh,
> Which I must needs call mine; thou art a boil,

A plague-sore, an embossed carbuncle,
In my corrupted blood. But I 'll not chide thee ;
Let shame come when it will, I do not call it ;
I do not bid the thunder-bearer shoot,
Nor tell tales of thee to high-judging Jove.'

This state of mind is further evident from the sudden change of his resolution to return home and reside with Goneril, because he believes that she will let him have more attendants than her sister. He has just before declared that he would rather 'abjure all roofs,' or 'knee the throne of France,' or be 'slave and sumpter to this detested groom,' than return with her ; and yet, because Regan entreats him to bring but five and twenty followers . . . he forgets all comparisons he has drawn between her and Goneril, so unfavourable to the latter; he forgets his deep-rooted hatred to Goneril, and proposes to return home with her :

'I 'll go with thee :
Thy fifty yet doth double five-and-twenty,
And thou art twice her love.'

At this point the mind seems almost falling into fatuity ; yet it is but for a moment, for immediately after comes that outburst of eloquence : 'O, reason not the need,' etc., the grandeur of which it would be difficult to overmatch with any other passage from dramatic literature. It concludes, not with the expression of noble anger, but with those of insane rage, at a loss for words to express itself.

'No, you unnatural hags,
I will have such revenges on you both,
That all the world shall—I will do such things,
What they are, yet I know not ; but they shall be

> The terrors of the earth. You think I 'll weep;
> No, I 'll not weep:
> I have full cause of weeping; but this heart
> Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws,
> Or ere I 'll weep. O fool, I shall go mad!'

He rushes into the stormy night, such a night as nature seldom sees, such a storm that 'man's nature cannot carry the affliction nor the fear.' He escapes from the cruel presence of his daughters to the bare heath, where 'for many miles about, there's scarce a bush.' Here in company with the fool, 'who labours to out-jest his heart-struck injuries' in reckless, frantic rage, he 'bids what will take all.'... The malady, which has existed from the first, has increased and developed, until it is now completed. And yet writers agree with Coleridge in considering that Lear only becomes actually insane at this point, and some indeed have endeavoured to mark the precise expression which indicates the change from sanity to insanity. That which they (under the vulgar error that raving madness, accompanied by delusion, is alone to be considered real insanity) take to be the first signs, must be considered the signs of the first crisis, or complete development of the disease.... The really critical point where delusion first shows itself ought to be placed a little further on, where Lear for the first time sees Edgar, and infers, with the veritable logic of delusion, that a state of misery so extreme must have been the work of his unkind daughters. Before this point, however, is reached, an event occurs very notable, although likely to escape notice; than which there is nothing in this great case from the poet's note book more remarkably illustrating

his profound knowledge of mental disease, not only in its symptomatology, but in its causation and development. It is *the addition of a physical cause* to these moral causes which have long been at work. Lear's inflated speeches, which indicate resistance to the warring elements, are followed by a moment of resignation and of calm, as if he were beaten down by them. He 'will be a pattern of all patience.' He thinks of the crimes of other men, in that speech of regal dignity: 'Let the great gods find out their enemies now.' He is 'a man more sinned against than sinning.' The energy of rage and of frantic resistance has passed by. Calmer thought succeeds, and then comes this remarkable admission:

> 'My wits begin to turn.
> Come on, my boy; how dost, my boy? art cold?
> I 'm cold myself. Where is this straw, my fellow?
> The art of our necessities is strange,
> That can make vile things precious. Come, your hovel.
> Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart
> That 's sorry for thee.'

The import of this must be weighed with a speech in the last act, when Lear is incoherent and full of delusion, but calmer than at this time, and with the reason and impertinency mixed of complete mania: 'When the rain came to wet me once, and the wind to make me chatter; when the thunder would not peace at my bidding; there I found 'em, there I smelt 'em out. Go to, they are not men o' their words; they told me I was every thing; 'tis a lie, I am not ague-proof.' This is thoroughly true to nature. Insanity, arising from mental constitution, and moral causes, often continues in a certain state of imperfect development; ... a state of exaggerated and perverted

emotion, accompanied by violent and irregular conduct, but unconnected with intellectual aberration; until some physical shock is incurred—bodily illness, or accident, or exposure to physical suffering; and then the imperfect type of mental disease is converted into perfect lunacy, characterised by more or less profound affection of the intellect, by delusion or incoherence. This is evidently the case in Lear.... Lear's first speech in this scene contains a profound psychological truth: Kent urges him to take shelter in a hovel from the tyranny of the night, too rough for nature to endure; Lear objects that the outward storm soothes that which rages within by diverting his attention from it ...

'Thou think'st 'tis much that this contentious storm
Invades us to the skin: so 'tis to thee;
But where the greater malady is fix'd
The lesser is scarce felt. Thou 'ldst shun a bear;
But if thy flight lay toward the raging sea,
Thou 'ldst meet the bear i' the mouth. When the mind 's free
The body 's delicate: the tempest in my mind
Doth from my senses take all feeling else
Save what beats there. Filial ingratitude!
. . . . . .
O, that way madness lies; let me shun that;
No more of that.'

This is the last speech of which there have been so many, expressing the consciousness of coming madness, which now yields to the actual presence of intellectual aberration; the excited emotions of unsound mind giving place to the delusions and incoherence of mania. There is one more speech before delusion appears. Lear will not enter the hovel because the tempest will not give him leave to ponder on things which would hurt him more;

and yet he yields with meekness unnatural to him; he will go in, and then 'I'll pray and then I'll sleep'... And now intellectual takes the place of moral disturbance. It is remarkable how comparatively passionless the old king is, after intellectual aberration has displayed itself. It is true, that even in his delusions he never loses the sense and memory of the filial ingratitude which has been the moral excitant of his madness; but henceforth he ceases to call down imprecations upon his daughters; or with confused sense of personal identity, he curses them, as the daughters of Edgar. It is as if in madness he has found a refuge from grief, a refuge which Gloucester even envies when he finds his own wretchedness 'deprived that benefit to end itself by death.'... After the interval which has elapsed between the sudden flight from the neighbourhood of these daughters who were plotting against his life, and his re-appearance at Dover with Cordelia's blessed succour nigh, the emotional state has changed into one less painful, yet indicating more profound disease. The proud and passionate king is now wild and gay, singing aloud, crowned with wild flowers; his incoherence is sometimes complete, and no idea holds in his mind with sufficient tenacity to be called a delusion.... A dozen false ideas chase each other in half as many minutes. Strictly speaking, perhaps each of the false idea-images of incoherence deserves the name of delusion, although it is not usually given. The simple important fact may be stated with regard to Lear thus: that in the first phase of his mind the false ideas are few, and have some consistency and duration; in the present phase they are numerous, disjointed, and transitory.... When Lear next appears a

prisoner with Cordelia, his mental state has again undergone great change. The weakness of exhaustion has disappeared, and the delusion and incoherency of the preceding excitement has yielded to the good influences with which this good daughter, thrice blessed in her devoted affection, has balmed the wounded soul. Lear has returned as nearly as possible to his state of mind before the storm, and the shock of physical suffering and exposure. Medical treatment and physical comfort, and the blessed influences of affection, have soothed his intellectual frenzy. But the moral disturbance remains, with this notable difference however, that he now gives vent to passionate love, as he formerly did to passionate anger and hate. There is no measure or reason in his love for Cordelia, as there was none in his hatred of Goneril. He forgets his age in one as in the other. In prison he will wear out sects of great ones; his enemies shall die and rot before he will part with Cordelia or weep at sorrow which has lost its sting now she is with him. This is not mania, but neither is it sound mind. It is the emotional excitability often seen in extreme age, as it is depicted in the early scenes of the drama, and it is precisely true to the probabilities of the mind history, that this should be the phase of infirmity displaying itself at this moment. Any other dramatist than Shakespeare would have represented the poor old king quite restored to the balance and control of his faculties. The complete efficiency of filial love would have been made to triumph over the laws of mental function. But Shakespeare has represented the exact degree of improvement which was probable under the circumstances, namely, restoration from the intellectual

mania which resulted from the combined influence of physical and moral shock, with persistence of the emotional excitement and disturbance which is the incurable and unalterable result of passion exaggerated by long habitude and by the malign influence of extreme age. The last scene, in which Lear's tough heart at length breaks over the murdered body of his dear child, is one of those master-pieces of tragic art, before which we are disposed to stand silent in awed admiration. The indurated sympathies of science, however, may examine even the death scene. The first thing to remark is, that there is no insanity in it, that Lear might have spoken and acted thus if his mind had never wandered. He has found Edmund's mercenary murderer hanging Cordelia, so as 'to lay the blame upon her own despair.' He kills the slave, and with the last remnant of strength carries the dear body into the middle of that heart-struck conclave, where the sisters who 'desperately are dead' already lie. At first he is under the excitement of mental agony, expressing itself in the wild wail:

> 'Howl, howl, howl, howl! O, you are men of stones:
> Had I your tongues and eyes, I 'ld use them so
> That heaven's vault should crack. She 's gone for ever!'

Then follows the intense cruel anxiety of false hope, followed by quick resolve and reasonable action: the demand for the looking-glass: the trial of the feather, to ascertain if any faint imperceptible breath remains. Then, the sustaining but fatal excitement over, leaden grief settles upon the heart and benumbs the feelings to every sense, save one.... The loyal friends around, Albany and Kent and Edgar, strive to arouse his attention from the gathering stupor, which they do not

yet recognize as that of death; and in banished Kent, now re-instated in the appurtenances and lendings of his rank, an object bound to stimulate attention and curiosity is at hand. But he has put off the revelation of his faithful service until it is too late to be understood.... Albany proceeds to make state arrangements, to promise the wages of virtue and the cup of deservings to friends and foes, and to resign his own absolute power to the old majesty, whose heart is beating slower and fainter, whose face is blanching, and whose features are pinching as the life current passes on its way in ever slower and smaller waves, until at length the change or aspect suddenly strikes the dull Duke, and he exclaims, 'O, see, see!' and then one flicker more of reflecting thought, one gentle request, 'Pray you undo this button,' expressing the physical feeling of want of air; one yearning look on her who 'll 'come no more,' and the silver thread is loosed, the golden bowl for ever broken."

Cordelia. "Of Cordelia's heavenly beauty of soul," said Schlegel, "I do not dare to speak." There needs, therefore, no apology if, declining an endeavour from which that critic shrank, I prefer to give my readers some of the results at which Mrs. Jameson * has arrived in her sympathetic estimate of our heroine's character. "Amid the awful, the overpowering interest of the story, amid the terrible convulsions of passion and suffering, and pictures of moral and physical wretchedness which harrow up the soul, the tender influence of Cordelia, like that of a celestial visitant, is felt and acknowledged without being quite understood. Like a soft star that shines

* *The Characteristics of Women*, pp. 263 *et seqq.*

for a moment from behind a stormy cloud, and the next is swallowed up in tempest and darkness, the impression it leaves is beautiful and deep, but vague. Speak of Cordelia to a critic, or to a general reader, all agree in the beauty of the portrait, for all must feel it; but when we come to details, I have heard more various and opposite opinions relative to her than any other of Shakespeare's characters—a proof of what I have advanced in the first instance, that from the simplicity with which the character is dramatically treated, and the small space it occupies, few are aware of its internal power or its wonderful depth of purpose."

"It appears to me that the whole character rests upon the two sublimest principles of human action—the love of truth and the sense of duty; but these when they stand alone are apt to strike us as severe and cold. Shakespeare has, therefore, wreathed them round with the dearest attributes of our feminine nature, the power of feeling and inspiring affection. The first part of the play shows us how Cordelia is loved, the second part how she can love. To her father she is the object of a secret preference; his agony at her supposed unkindness draws from him the confession that he had loved her most, and 'thought to set his rest on her kind nursery.' Till then she had been 'his best object, the argument of his praise, balm of his age, most best, most dearest!' The faithful and worthy Kent is ready to brave death and exile in her defence; and afterwards a further impression of her benign sweetness is conveyed in a simple and beautiful manner, when we are told that 'since the

Lady Cordelia went to France, her father's poor fool hath much pined away.' We have her sensibility 'when patience and sorrow strove which should express her goodliest'; and all her filial tenderness when she commits her poor father to the care of the physician, when she hangs over him as he is sleeping, and kisses him as she contemplates the wreck of grief and majesty." Then noticing her mild magnanimity towards her sisters, the modest pride with which she replies to Burgundy, the calm fortitude and elevation of soul with which she bears her defeat and imprisonment, and the unselfishness of the effort she has made in her father's behalf, Mrs. Jameson continues, "But it will be said that the qualities here exemplified—as sensibility, gentleness, magnanimity, fortitude, generous affection—are qualities which belong, in their perfection, to others of Shakespeare's characters.... What is it, then, which lends to Cordelia that peculiar and individual truth of character which distinguishes her from every other human being?"

"It is a natural reserve, a tardiness of disposition, 'which often leaves the history unspoke which it intends to do'; a subdued quietness of deportment and expression, a veiled shyness thrown over all her emotions, her language and her manner, making the outward demonstration invariably fall short of what we know to be the feeling within. Not only is the portrait singularly beautiful and interesting in itself, but the conduct of Cordelia, and the part which she bears in the beginning of the story, is rendered consistent and natural by the wonderful truth and delicacy with which this peculiar disposition is sustained

throughout the play." Referring to Lear's question, 'What can you say to draw A third more opulent than the rest,' as "enough to strike dumb for ever a generous, delicate, but shy disposition, such as is Cordelia's, by holding out a bribe for professions," Mrs. Jameson continues, "If Cordelia were not so portrayed, this deliberate coolness [of her answers] would strike us as verging on harshness and obstinacy; but it is beautifully represented as a certain modification of character, the necessary result of feelings habitually, if not naturally, repressed: and through the whole play we trace the same peculiar and individual disposition—the same absence of all display—the same sobriety of speech veiling the most profound affections—the same quiet steadiness of purpose—the same shrinking from all emotion." Passing on to the description of Cordelia's behaviour when receiving from Kent an account of her sisters' conduct towards their father, Mrs. Jameson remarks, "But all the passages hitherto quoted must yield in beauty and power to that scene, in which her poor father recognizes her, and in the intervals of distraction asks forgiveness of his wronged child. The subdued pathos and simplicity of Cordelia's character, her quiet but intense feeling, the misery and humiliation of the bewildered old man, are brought before us in so few words, and at the same time sustained with such a deep intuitive knowledge of the innermost workings of the human heart, that as there is nothing surpassing this scene in Shakespeare himself, so there is nothing that can be compared to it in any other writer." Finally, Mrs. Jameson compares Cordelia, as the heroine of filial tenderness, with Antigone,

daughter of Œdipus, as represented in two of Sophocles' plays, the *Antigone* and the *Œdipus Coloneus*. "As poetical conceptions," the two characters "rest on the same basis: they are both pure abstractions of truth, piety, and natural affection; and in both love, as a passion, is kept entirely out of sight.... The filial piety of Antigone is the most affecting part of the tragedy of *Œdipus Coloneus:* her sisterly affection, and her heroic self-devotion to a religious duty, form the plot of the tragedy called by her name ... she says the most beautiful things in the world, performs the most heroic actions, and all her words and actions are so placed before us as to *command* our admiration. According to the classical ideas of virtue and heroism, the character is sublime, and in the delineation there is a severe simplicity mingled with its Grecian grace, a unity, a grandeur, an elegance, which appeal to our taste and our understanding, while they fill and exalt the imagination. But in Cordelia it is not the external colouring or form, it is not what she says or does, but what she is in herself, what she feels, thinks, and suffers, which continually awaken our sympathy and interest. The heroism of Cordelia is more passive and tender—it melts into our heart; and in the veiled loveliness and unostentatious delicacy of her character there is an effect more profound and artless, if it be less striking and less elaborate, than in the Grecian heroine. To Antigone we give our admiration, to Cordelia our tears. Antigone stands before us in her austere and statue-like beauty, like one of the marbles of the Parthenon. If Cordelia reminded us of anything on earth, it is one of the Madonnas in the old Italian

pictures, 'with downcast eyes beneath th' almighty dove'; and as that heavenly form is connected with our human sympathies only by the expression of maternal tenderness or maternal sorrow, even so Cordelia would be almost too angelic, were she not linked to our earthly feelings, bound to our very hearts, by her filial love, her wrongs, her sufferings, and her tears."

Goneril and Regan.

Between these two terrible creatures Dowden* thus distinguishes: "Goneril is the calm wielder of a pitiless force, the resolute initiator of cruelty. Regan is a smaller, shriller, fiercer, more eager piece of malice. The tyranny of the elder sister is a cold, persistent pressure, as little affected by tenderness or scruple as the action of some crushing hammer; Regan's ferocity is more unmeasured, and less abnormal or monstrous. Regan would avoid her father, and while she confronts him alone, quails a little as she hears the old man's curse pronounced against her sister:

> 'O, the blest gods! so will you wish on me
> When the rash mood is on.'

But Goneril knows that a helpless old man is only a helpless old man, and that words are merely words. When, after Lear's terrible malediction, he rides away with his train, Goneril, who would bring things to an issue, pursues her father, determined to see matters out to the end. To complete the horror they produce in us, these monsters are amorous. Their love is even more hideous than their hate. The wars of

> 'Dragons of the prime
> That tare each other in their slime'

formed a spectacle less prodigious than their mutual

* *Shakespeare, his Mind and Art*, pp. 263, 4.

blandishments and caresses. To the last Goneril is true to her character. Regan is despatched out of life by her sister; Goneril thrusts her own life aside, and boldly enters the great darkness of the grave."

Edmund. Starting in life with the brand of bastardy upon him, and sent abroad because to one so circumstanced no career at home lay before him, conscious at the same time that personally and mentally he is well endowed, Edmund has some excuse for feeling a grudge against his father to whom his shame is due, and against his brother who is heir to everything that high rank and wealth can confer, while he can look for nothing but what his father's liberality may give or what adventurous chance may yield to his own wit and courage. On the cruel hindrances by which he is shackled he has evidently brooded long; and against the injustice with which, as it seems to him, the rotten conventions of custom have punished no fault of his, he is prepared to rebel by any means in his power. Law is for those who have rights and privileges; to him with none to assert, Nature, that is, the dictates of his own warped inclinations, is the only divinity to be acknowledged. For the brother who evidently regards him with generous affection, he has no brotherly reciprocation of feeling; nor while recognizing his noble character, does he see in such nobleness, coupled with its frank simplicity, anything more than a subject for contemptuous satisfaction at his own superior astuteness as being in some measure a compensation for his other disabilities. His father's love he values only as it may be useful to his purposes; while for his credulity he has a scorn justified by the suspicion which Gloucester readily entertains regarding Edgar at the very moment

of protesting how "tenderly and entirely" he loved him, —suspicion of designs so foul that if charged against the most vicious of sons they might have seemed incredible. Religion Edmund has none. To him it is but an idle tale, with even less terror than human laws and customs, the practical working of which, ridiculous as they might be in themselves, could not be wholly despised. There is nothing therefore in the way of sentiment or moral restraint to hinder his action. At the same time there does not appear to be in him any of Iago's "motive-hunting of a motiveless malignity," any of Richard the Third's enjoyment of cruelty as cruelty. A practical object is before him, an object justified to himself by the injustice from which he conceives himself to suffer, and adequate in its promised reward to weigh down in the balance a consideration so flimsy as the disgrace of hypocrisy, falsehood, forgery, results so trivial as the robbery of a brother, the torture, mental and physical, of a father. His immorality as regards Goneril and Regan is, as it were, a mere pastime of vice, a pleasant indulgence of natural and hereditary depravity, having in it little strength of interest except as its prosecution aids and abets the engrossing purpose of his life. The sole redeeming quality of his character is his personal bravery as shown in the battle and in accepting the combat with Edgar which, had he chosen, he might without dishonour have declined; the only act betraying compunction of conscience, his endeavour when at the point of death to save Cordelia and Lear, whom as possible obstacles to the fulfilment of his ambition he had treacherously sought to have murdered.

That Shakespeare loved his Fools right well, we may The Fool.

be sure, and equally so that of all his Fools Lear's Fool was nearest his heart. Touchstone, Feste, Lavache, are prodigally endowed with wit, wisdom, humour, drollery, but to none of them belongs the deep pathos and tender heart covered by the motley of him whose introduction to us is coupled with the fact that for two days he has kept away from his loved master in solitary pining for the disowned Cordelia, and whose disappearance means death from grief at sufferings not his own. It is when Goneril's unkindness begins to make itself felt that Lear, lonely in heart, bethinks himself of the faithful follower whose caustic sallies have no doubt lightened for him many an hour of weary life, and the ready gibes with which, when he appears, he satirizes Lear's folly in giving away his kingdom are a better medicine than any professions of condolence. For license of tongue he has the privilege belonging to his class, but it is not under this that he shelters himself when so freely speaking his mind of and to the angry Goneril. Indignation at his master's wrongs makes him careless of his own safety, and he scruples nothing to face the wrath of one from whom he knows he need expect no forbearance. Accompanying the king in his weary pursuit of Regan, he still endeavours to soothe his sorrows by a display of pungent humour beneath which it is clear that his heart is wrung by a sympathy that can find no other outlet. We see him again in the terrible storm, amid the terrors of which Lear's madness culminates, labouring "to outjest His heart-struck miseries," and finally at the hovel in which Lear is persuaded to take refuge. "The most noteworthy point in him," says Hudson,* "and the real

* *Shakespeare, His Life, Art and Characters*, ii. pp. 352, 3.

key to his character, lies in that while his heart is slowly breaking he never speaks, nor even appears so much as to think of his own suffering. He seems indeed quite unconscious of it. His anguish is purely the anguish of sympathy; a sympathy so deep and intense as to induce absolute forgetfulness of self; all his capacities of feeling being perfectly engrossed with the sufferings of those whom he loves. He withdraws from the scene with the words, 'And I'll go to bed at noon'; which means simply that the dear fellow is dying, and this, too, purely of others' sorrows, which he feels more keenly than they do themselves. She who was the light of his eyes has gone, dowered with her father's curse and strangered with his oath; Kent and Edgar have vanished from his recognition, he knows not whither, the victims of wrong and crime; the wicked seem to be having all things their own way; the elements have joined their persecutions to the cruelties of men; there is no pity in the Heavens, no help from the Earth; he sees nothing but a 'world's convention of agonies' before him; and his straining of mind to play assuagement upon others' woes has fairly breached the citadel of his life. But the deepest grief of all has now overtaken him; his old master's wits are all shattered in pieces: to prevent this, he has all along been toiling his forces to the utmost; and, now that it has come in spite of him, he has no longer anything to live for; yet he must still mask his passion in a characteristic disguise, and breathe out his life in a play of thought."

Kent: Gloucester: Edgar.

Of these three characters Kent is the most striking and most noble. His devotion to his master, from whom he has received such harsh treatment, is unswerving,

untiring, and utterly regardless of the dangers he may bring upon himself. For such devotion we are prepared from almost the first words he speaks. None but a brave man would have ventured as he did to come "between the dragon and his wrath," none but a resolute one to persist in opposition to despotic will and power. His championship of Cordelia makes it manifest to us that when determining to follow the fortunes of the unhappy king he will do so with no halting step, that whatever sacrifices may be demanded of him he will gladly pay. As the troubles around him increase, his great qualities stand out all the more strongly. He displays not only a rare fidelity, but large resource, wisdom, and foresight. His equanimity under the insults put upon him by Regan is unruffled; amid the sufferings which he shares with his master his cheerfulness abates no whit; while the tender care with which he watches over Lear is what we perhaps might not have expected from one so blunt of speech and impetuous of manner.

> "O thou good Kent, how shall I live and work
> To match thy goodness? My life will be too short
> And every measure fail me,"

are Cordelia's words of no exaggerated acknowledgment, and are uttered by one who justly says of herself,

> "what I well intend
> "I 'll do 't before I speak."

And when all his sacrifice of love is fruitless, when he for whom it has so cheerfully been made is unable to profit by it, or even to recognize to whom he owes such loyal tendance, but passes away, his mind still clouded

with its sad disease and his heart broken by the last awful blow of Cordelia's death, for Kent there is no further tie to earth, no other hope but that of following his master elsewhere as here. To Albany's entreaty that he will share with Edgar the government of the realm his answer is,

> "I have a journey, sir, shortly to go;
> My master calls me, I must not say no.

Of a very different stamp is Gloucester; shallow, frivolous, and selfish, though a man of warm impulse and generous intention. For the consequences of his early sin he appears to feel little or no remorse, nor, though his love is indulgently given to both his sons, has he cared to understand the character of either. Edgar's loyalty of nature is so little comprehended that on evidence opposed to every doctrine of probability he is prepared to hold him guilty of the most unnatural of crimes. Into Edmund's character he has gained so little insight that any plausible assertion he may make is accepted with unquestioning credulity. In the king's behalf he nerves himself so far that he will not allow him to perish in the storm without making some effort to befriend him, but it is only when he is driven to bay that he has the courage openly to condemn the ferocity of Regan and Cornwall. His own cruel bodily sufferings act as a tonic to his mind or at least open his eyes to the worthlessness of his past life, and before that life closes he has learnt submission to the will of heaven and can recognize that the punishment fallen upon him is in just retribution of the sins of which he had hitherto thought so slightly. In Edgar we have a character in some

respects as grand as that of Kent, though perhaps hardly as unselfish and lovable. At the outset, indeed, we are scarcely prepared for the nobility of character which after events bring out. It strikes us as strange that he should be so ready to accept Edmund's story of his father's ill-will towards him and should not at once have sought that father's presence to ascertain the possible grounds of his distrust. Described by Edmund as one

> "Whose nature is so far from doing harms
> That he suspects none,"

he not only by his advice avoids a father by whom he must know himself to be loved and to have deserved to be loved, but is shortly afterwards persuaded to take a step in itself so suspicious as that of fleeing from home instead of facing inquiry. Possibly, aware of his father's credulity, he believes it impossible to establish his innocence in the teeth of such a plot against him as that at which Edmund has hinted; but the vigorous energy, and calm, collected, prudence with which he meets difficulties later on, seem somewhat in contrast with the precipitation that now determines his conduct. Be this as it may, a fugitive and a proclaimed traitor, he, like Kent, though with a different object, assumes a disguise, that of an escaped lunatic. In this condition he falls in first with the mad king and afterwards with his own miserable father. Lear's sufferings call out his deepest sympathies, though it is beyond his power in any way to remedy them. With his father it is different. Roused out of himself and the sorrows which had seemed almost too great to be borne, he sees before him a task prescribed by love, and calling for the

exercise of all the patience, tenderness, and tact that he can command. As we watch him in his endeavour to solace the mental no less than the physical anguish of the father whose distrust of himself has been so grievous, as we have proof of the courage with which he defends him and the skill whereby he wins him from the determination of suicide to a calm acceptance of the will of the gods, listen to his relation of the peaceful close of life which his ministrations have made possible, witness his noble defiance of his treacherous brother and the still more noble forgiveness which he grants to his fallen foe, we feel that Edgar is no unworthy "yoke-fellow in arms" with Kent in the fierce struggle against evil wherein their fate has involved them.

The following is Daniel's Time-Analysis of the Play: Duration of Action.

Day 1. Act i. sc. i.
,, 2. Act i. sc. ii.
An Interval of something less than a fortnight.
,, 3. Act i. sc. iii, iv, and v.
,, 4. Act ii. sc. i, and ii.
,, 5. Act ii. sc. iii, and iv; Act iii. sc. i-vi.
,, 6. Act iii. sc. vii; Act iv. sc. i.
,, 7. Act iv. sc. ii.
Perhaps an *Interval* of a day or two.
,, 8. Act iv. sc. iii.
,, 9. Act iv. sc. iv, v, and vi.
,, 10. Act iv. sc. vii; Act. v. sc. i-iii.

KING LEAR.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LEAR, king of Britain.
KING OF FRANCE.
DUKE OF BURGUNDY.
DUKE OF CORNWALL.
DUKE OF ALBANY.
EARL OF KENT.
EARL OF GLOUCESTER.
EDGAR, son to Gloucester.
EDMUND, bastard son to Gloucester.
CURAN, a courtier.
Old Man, tenant to Gloucester.
Doctor.
Fool.
OSWALD, steward to Goneril.
A Captain employed by Edmund.
Gentleman attendant on Cordelia.
A Herald.
Servants to Cornwall.

GONERIL,
REGAN,
CORDELIA, } daughters to Lear.

Knights of Lear's train, Captains, Messengers, Soldiers, and Attendants.

SCENE: *Britain.*

KING LEAR.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *King Lear's palace.*

Enter KENT, GLOUCESTER, *and* EDMUND.

Kent. I thought the king had more affected the Duke of Albany than Cornwall.

Glou. It did always seem so to us: but now, in the division of the kingdom, it appears not which of the dukes he values most; for equalities are so weighed, that curiosity in neither can make choice of either's moiety.

Kent. Is not this your son, my lord?

Glou. His breeding, sir, hath been at my charge: I have so often blushed to acknowledge him, that now I am brazed to it. But I have, sir, a son by order of law, some year elder than this, who yet is no dearer in my account: though this knave came something saucily into the world before he was sent for, yet was his mother fair. Do you know this noble gentleman, Edmund?

Edm. No, my lord.

Glou. My lord of Kent: remember him hereafter as my honourable friend.

Edm. My services to your lordship.

Kent. I must love you, and sue to know you better.

Edm. Sir, I shall study deserving. 20

Glou. He hath been out nine years, and away he shall again. The king is coming.

Sennet. *Enter* KING LEAR, CORNWALL, ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN, CORDELIA, *and* Attendants.

Lear. Attend the lords of France and Burgundy, Gloucester.
Glou. I shall, my liege. [*Exeunt Gloucester and Edmund.*
Lear. Meantime we shall express our darker purpose.
Give me the map there. Know that we have divided
In three our kingdom: and 'tis our fast intent
To shake all cares and business from our age;
Conferring them on younger strengths, while we
Unburthen'd crawl toward death. Our son of Cornwall,
And you, our no less loving son of Albany,
We have this hour a constant will to publish
Our daughters' several dowers, that future strife
May be prevented now. The princes, France and Burgundy,
Great rivals in our youngest daughter's love,
Long in our court have made their amorous sojourn
And here are to be answer'd. Tell me, my daughters,—
Since now we will divest us, both of rule,
Interest of territory, cares of state,—
Which of you shall we say doth love us most?
That we our largest bounty may extend
Where nature doth with merit challenge. Goneril,
Our eldest-born, speak first.
Gon. Sir, I love you more than words can wield the matter;
Dearer than eye-sight, space, and liberty;
Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare;
No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honour;
As much as child e'er loved, or father found;
A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable;
Beyond all manner of so much I love you.
Cor. [*Aside*] What shall Cordelia do? Love, and be silent.
Lear. Of all these bounds, even from this line to this,

With shadowy forests and with champains rich'd,
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,
We make thee lady: to thine and Albany's issue
Be this perpetual. What says our second daughter,
Our dearest Regan, wife to Cornwall? Speak.
Reg. Sir, I am made
Of the self-same metal that my sister is,
And prize me at her worth. In my true heart,
I find she names my very deed of love;
Only she comes too short: that I profess
Myself an enemy to all other joys,
Which the most precious square of sense possesses;
And find I am alone felicitate
In your dear highness' love.
Cor. [*Aside*] Then poor Cordelia!
And yet not so; since, I am sure, my love's
More richer than my tongue.
Lear. To thee and thine hereditary ever
Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom;
No less in space, validity, and pleasure,
Than that conferred on Goneril. Now, our joy,
Although our last and least; to whose young love
The vines of France and milk of Burgundy
Strive to be interess'd; what can you say to draw
A third more opulent than your sisters? Speak.
Cor. Nothing, my lord.
Lear. Nothing!
Cor. Nothing.
Lear. Nothing will come of nothing: speak again.
Cor. Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave
My heart into my mouth: I love your majesty
According to my bond; nor more nor less.
Lear. How, how, Cordelia! mend your speech a little,
Lest it may mar your fortunes.
Cor. Good my lord,
You have begot me, bred me, loved me: I

Return those duties back as are right fit,
Obey you, love you, and most honour you.
Why have my sisters husbands, if they say
They love you all? Haply, when I shall wed,
That lord whose hand must take my plight shall carry
Half my love with him, half my care and duty:
Sure, I shall never marry like my sisters,
To love my father all.

Lear. But goes thy heart with this?

Cor. Ay, good my lord,

Lear. So young, and so untender?

Cor. So young, my lord, and true.

Lear. Let it be so; thy truth, then, be thy dower:
For, by the sacred radiance of the sun,
The mysteries of Hecate, and the night;
By all the operation of the orbs
From whom we do exist, and cease to be;
Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
Propinquity and property of blood,
And as a stranger to my heart and me
Hold thee, from this, for ever. The barbarous Scythian,
Or he that makes his generation messes
To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom
Be as well neighbour'd, pitied, and relieved,
As thou my sometime daughter.

Kent. Good my liege,—

Lear. Peace, Kent!
Come not between the dragon and his wrath.
I loved her most, and thought to set my rest
On her kind nursery. Hence, and avoid my sight!
So be my grave my peace, as here I give
Her father's heart from her! Call France; who stirs?
Call Burgundy. Cornwall and Albany,
With my two daughters' dowers digest this third:
Let pride, which she calls plainness, marry her.
I do invest you jointly with my power,

Pre-eminence, and all the large effects
That troop with majesty. Ourself, by monthly course,
With reservation of an hundred knights,
By you to be sustain'd, shall our abode
Make with you by due turns. Only we still retain
The name, and all the additions to a king;
The sway, revenue, execution of the rest,
Beloved sons, be yours: which to confirm,
This coronet part betwixt you. [*Giving the crown.*
Kent. Royal Lear,
Whom I have ever honour'd as my king,
Loved as my father, as my master follow'd,
As my great patron thought on in my prayers,—
Lear. The bow is bent and drawn, make from the shaft.
Kent. Let it fall rather, though the fork invade
The region of my heart: be Kent unmannerly,
When Lear is mad. What wilt thou do, old man?
Think'st thou that duty shall have dread to speak,
When power to flattery bows? To plainness honour's bound,
When majesty stoops to folly. Reverse thy doom;
And, in thy best consideration, check
This hideous rashness: answer my life my judgement,
Thy youngest daughter does not love thee least;
Nor are those empty-hearted whose low sound
Reverbs no hollowness.
Lear. Kent, on thy life, no more.
Kent. My life I never held but as a pawn
To wage against thy enemies; nor fear to lose it,
Thy safety being the motive.
Lear. Out of my sight!
Kent. See better, Lear: and let me still remain
The true blank of thine eye.
Lear. Now, by Apollo,—
Kent. Now, by Apollo, king,
Thou swear'st thy gods in vain.

Lear. O, vassal! miscreant!
[*Laying his hand on his sword.*

Alb. } Dear sir, forbear.
Corn. }

Kent. Do;
Kill thy physician, and the fee bestow
Upon thy foul disease. Revoke thy doom;
Or, whilst I can vent clamour from my throat,
I'll tell thee thou dost evil.

Lear. Hear me, recreant!
On thine allegiance, hear me!
Since thou hast sought to make us break our vow,
Which we durst never yet, and with strain'd pride
To come between our sentence and our power,
Which nor our nature nor our place can bear,
Our potency made good, take thy reward.
Five days we do allot thee, for provision
To shield thee from diseases of the world;
And on the sixth to turn thy hated back
Upon our kingdom: if, on the tenth day following,
Thy banish'd trunk be found in our dominions,
The moment is thy death. Away! by Jupiter,
This shall not be revoked.

Kent. Fare thee well, king: sith thus thou wilt appear,
Freedom lives hence, and banishment is here.
[*To Cordelia*] The gods to their dear shelter take thee, maid,
That justly think'st, and hast most rightly said!
[*To Regan and Goneril*] And your large speeches may your deeds approve,
That good effects may spring from words of love.
Thus Kent, O princes, bids you all adieu;
He'll shape his old course in a country new. [*Exit.*

Flourish. Re-enter GLOUCESTER, *with* FRANCE, BURGUNDY, *and* Attendants.

Glou. Here's France and Burgundy, my noble lord.

Lear. My lord of Burgundy,
We first address towards you, who with this king
Hath rivall'd for our daughter: what, in the least,
Will you require in present dower with her,
Or cease your quest of love?
Bur. Most royal majesty,
I crave no more than what your highness offer'd,
Nor will you tender less.
Lear. Right noble Burgundy,
When she was dear to us, we did hold her so;
But now her price is fall'n. Sir, there she stands:
If aught within that little seeming substance,
Or all of it, with our displeasure pieced,
And nothing more, may fitly like your grace,
She 's there, and she is yours.
Bur. I know no answer.
Lear. Will you, with those infirmities she owes.
Unfriended, new-adopted to our hate,
Dower'd with our curse, and stranger'd with our oath,
Take her, or leave her?
Bur. Pardon me, royal sir;
Election makes not up on such conditions.
Lear. Then leave her, sir; for, by the power that made me,
I tell you all her wealth. [*To France*] For you, great king,
I would not from your love make such a stray,
To match you where I hate; therefore beseech you
To avert your liking a more worthier way
Than on a wretch whom nature is ashamed
Almost to acknowledge hers.
France. This is most strange,
That she, that even but now was your best object,
The argument of your praise, balm of your age,
Most best, most dearest, should in this trice of time
Commit a thing so monstrous, to dismantle
So many folds of favour. Sure, her offence
Must be of such unnatural degree,

That monsters it, or your fore-vouch'd affection
Fall'n into taint: which to believe of her,
Must be a faith that reason without miracle
Could never plant in me.
Cor. I yet beseech your majesty,—
If for I want that glib and oily art,
To speak and purpose not; since what I well intend,
I'll do't before I speak,—that you make known
It is no vicious blot, nor other foulness,
No unchaste action, or dishonour'd step,
That hath deprived me of your grace and favour;
But even for want of that for which I am richer,
A still-soliciting eye, and such a tongue
As I am glad I have not, though not to have it
Hath lost me in your liking.
Lear. Better thou
Hadst not been born than not to have pleased me better.
France. Is it but this,—a tardiness in nature
Which often leaves the history unspoke
That it intends to do? My lord of Burgundy,
What say you to the lady? Love's not love
When it is mingled with regards that stand
Aloof from the entire point. Will you have her?
She is herself a dowry.
Bur. Royal Lear,
Give but that portion which yourself proposed,
And here I take Cordelia by the hand,
Duchess of Burgundy.
Lear. Nothing: I have sworn; I am firm.
Bur. I am sorry, then, you have so lost a father
That you must lose a husband.
Cor. Peace be with Burgundy!
Since that respects of fortune are his love,
I shall not be his wife.
France. Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich, being poor;
Most choice, forsaken; and most loved, despised!

Thee and thy virtues here I seize upon :
Be it lawful I take up what 's cast away.
Gods, gods ! 'tis strange that from their cold'st neglect
My love should kindle to inflamed respect.
Thy dowerless daughter, king, thrown to my chance,
Is queen of us, of ours, and our fair France :
Not all the dukes of waterish Burgundy
Can buy this unprized precious maid of me.
Bid them farewell, Cordelia, though unkind :
Thou losest here, a better where to find.
Lear. Thou hast her, France : let her be thine ; for we
Have no such daughter, nor shall ever see
That face of hers again. Therefore be gone
Without our grace, our love, our benison.
Come, noble Burgundy.
[*Flourish. Exeunt all but France, Goneril, Regan, and Cordelia.*
France. Bid farewell to your sisters.
Cor. Ye jewels of our father, with wash'd eyes
Cordelia leaves you : I know you what you are ;
And like a sister am most loath to call
Your faults as they are named. Use well our father :
To your professed bosoms I commit him :
But yet, alas, stood I within his grace,
I would prefer him to a better place.
So, farewell to you both.
Reg. Prescribe not us our duties.
Gon. Let your study
Be to content your lord, who hath received you
At fortune's alms. You have obedience scanted,
And well are worth the want that you have wanted.
Cor. Time shall unfold what plaited cunning hides :
Who cover faults, at last shame them derides.
Well may you prosper !
France. Come, my fair Cordelia.
[*Exeunt France and Cordelia.*

Gon. Sister, it is not a little I have to say of what most nearly appertains to us both. I think our father will hence to-night.

Reg. That's most certain, and with you; next month with us.

Gon. You see how full of changes his age is; the observation we have made of it hath not been little: he always loved our sister most; and with what poor judgement he hath now cast her off appears too grossly.

Reg. 'Tis the infirmity of his age: yet he hath ever but slenderly known himself.

Gon. The best and soundest of his time hath been but rash; then must we look to receive from his age, not alone the imperfections of long-engraffed condition, but therewithal the unruly waywardness that infirm and choleric years bring with them.

Reg. Such unconstant starts are we like to have from him as this of Kent's banishment.

Gon. There is further compliment of leave-taking between France and him. Pray you, let's hit together: if our father carry authority with such dispositions as he bears, this last surrender of his will but offend us.

Reg. We shall further think on't.

Gon. We must do something, and i' the heat. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The Earl of Gloucester's castle.*

Enter EDMUND, *with a letter.*

Edm. Thou, nature, art my goddess; to thy law
My services are bound. Wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custom, and permit
The curiosity of nations to deprive me,
For that I am some twelve or fourteen moonshines
Lag of a brother? Why bastard? wherefore base?
When my dimensions are as well compact,

My mind as generous, and my shape as true,
As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us
With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base?
Well, then,
Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land:
Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund
As to the legitimate: fine word,—legitimate!
Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed,
And my invention thrive, Edmund the base
Shall top the legitimate. I grow; I prosper:
Now, gods, stand up for bastards!

Enter GLOUCESTER.

Glou. Kent banish'd thus! and France in choler parted!
And the king gone to-night! subscribed his power!
Confined to exhibition! All this done
Upon the gad! Edmund, how now! what news?

Edm. So please your lordship, none. [*Putting up the letter.*

Glou. Why so earnestly seek you to put up that letter?

Edm. I know no news, my lord.

Glou. What paper were you reading?

Edm. Nothing, my lord.

Glou. No? What needed, then, that terrible despatch of it into your pocket? the quality of nothing hath not such need to hide itself. Let's see: come, if it be nothing, I shall not need spectacles.

Edm. I beseech you, sir, pardon me: it is a letter from my brother, that I have not all o'er-read; and for so much as I have perused, I find it not fit for your o'er-looking.

Glou. Give me the letter, sir.

Edm. I shall offend, either to detain or give it. The contents, as in part I understand them, are to blame.

Glou. Let's see, let's see.

Edm. I hope, for my brother's justification, he wrote this but as an essay or taste of my virtue.

Glou. [*Reads*] 'This policy and reverence of age makes

the world bitter to the best of our times; keeps our fortunes from us till our oldness cannot relish them. I begin to find an idle and fond bondage in the oppression of aged tyranny; who sways, not as it hath power, but as it is suffered. Come to me, that of this I may speak more. If our father would sleep till I waked him, you should enjoy half his revenue for ever, and live the beloved of your brother,

EDGAR.'

Hum—conspiracy!—'Sleep till I waked him,—you should enjoy half his revenue,'—My son Edgar! Had he a hand to write this? a heart and brain to breed it in?—When came this to you? who brought it? 53

Edm. It was not brought me, my lord; there's the cunning of it; I found it thrown in at the casement of my closet.

Glou. You know the character to be your brother's?

Edm. If the matter were good, my lord, I durst swear it were his; but, in respect of that, I would fain think it were not. 60

Glou. It is his.

Edm. It is his hand, my lord; but I hope his heart is not in the contents.

Glou. Hath he never heretofore sounded you in this business?

Edm. Never, my lord: but I have heard him oft maintain it to be fit, that, sons at perfect age, and fathers declining, the father should be as ward to the son, and the son manage his revenue.

Glou. O villain, villain! His very opinion in the letter! Abhorred villain! Unnatural, detested, brutish villain! worse than brutish! Go, sirrah, seek him; I'll apprehend him: abominable villain! Where is he? 73

Edm. I do not well know, my lord. If it shall please you to suspend your indignation against my brother till you can derive from him better testimony of his intent, you shall run a certain course; where, if you violently proceed against

him, mistaking his purpose, it would make a great gap in your own honour, and shake in pieces the heart of his obedience. I dare pawn down my life for him, that he hath wrote this to feel my affection to your honour, and to no further pretence of danger. 82

Glou. Think you so?

Edm. If your honour judge it meet, I will place you where you shall hear us confer of this, and by an auricular assurance have your satisfaction; and that without any further delay than this very evening.

Glou. He cannot be such a monster—

Edm. Nor is not, sure. 89

Glou. To his father, that so tenderly and entirely loves him. Heaven and earth! Edmund, seek him out; wind me into him, I pray you: frame the business after your own wisdom. I would unstate myself, to be in a due resolution.

Edm. I will seek him, sir, presently; convey the business as I shall find means, and acquaint you withal.

Glou. These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend no good to us: though the wisdom of nature can reason it thus and thus, yet nature finds itself scourged by the sequent effects: love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide: in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond cracked 'twixt son and father. This villain of mine comes under the prediction; there's son against father: the king falls from bias of nature; there's father against child. We have seen the best of our time: machinations, hollowness, treachery, and all ruinous disorders, follow us disquietly to our graves. Find out this villain, Edmund; it shall lose thee nothing; do it carefully. And the noble and true-hearted Kent banished! his offence, honesty! 'Tis strange. [*Exit.* 109

Edm. This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in fortune,—often the surfeit of our own behaviour,—we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars: as if we were villains by necessity;

fools by heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and treachers, by spherical predominance; drunkards, liars, and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of planetary influence; and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on. Edgar—

Enter EDGAR.

and pat he comes like the catastrophe of the old comedy: my cue is villanous melancholy, with a sigh like Tom o' Bedlam. O, these eclipses do portend these divisions! fa, sol, la, mi.

Edg. How now, brother Edmund! what serious contemplation are you in?

Edm. I am thinking, brother, of a prediction I read this other day, what should follow these eclipses.

Edg. Do you busy yourself about that?

Edm. I promise you, the effects he writes of succeed unhappily; as of unnaturalness between the child and the parent; death, dearth, dissolutions of ancient amities; divisions in state, menaces and maledictions against king and nobles; needless diffidences, banishment of friends, dissipation of cohorts, nuptial breaches, and I know not what.

Edg. How long have you been a sectary astronomical?

Edm. Come, come; when saw you my father last?

Edg. Why, the night gone by.

Edm. Spake you with him?

Edg. Ay, two hours together.

Edm. Parted you in good terms? Found you no displeasure in him by word or countenance?

Edg. None at all.

Edm. Bethink yourself wherein you may have offended him: and at my entreaty forbear his presence till some little time hath qualified the heat of his displeasure; which at this instant so rageth in him, that with the mischief of your person it would scarcely allay.

Edg. Some villain hath done me wrong.

Edm. That's my fear. I pray you, have a continent for

bearance till the speed of his rage goes slower; and, as I say, retire with me to my lodging, from whence I will fitly bring you to hear my lord speak: pray ye, go; there's my key: if you do stir abroad, go armed.

Edg. Armed, brother!

Edm. Brother, I advise you to the best; go armed: I am no honest man if there be any good meaning towards you: I have told you what I have seen and heard; but faintly, nothing like the image and horror of it: pray you, away.

Edg. Shall I hear from you anon?

Edm. I do serve you in this business. [*Exit Edgar.*

A credulous father! and a brother noble,
Whose nature is so far from doing harms,
That he suspects none: on whose foolish honesty
My practices ride easy! I see the business.
Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit:
All with me's meet that I can fashion fit. [*Exit.*

SCENE III. *The Duke of Albany's palace.*

Enter GONERIL, *and* OSWALD, *her steward.*

Gon. Did my father strike my gentleman for chiding of his fool?

Osw. Yes, madam.

Gon. By day and night he wrongs me; every hour
He flashes into one gross crime or other,
That sets us all at odds: I'll not endure it:
His knights grow riotous, and himself upbraids us
On every trifle. When he returns from hunting,
I will not speak with him; say I am sick:
If you come slack of former services,
You shall do well; the fault of it I'll answer.

Osw. He's coming, madam; I hear him. [*Horns within.*

Gon. Put on what weary negligence you please,
You and your fellows; I'ld have it come to question:

If he dislike it, let him to our sister,
Whose mind and mine, I know, in that are one,
Not to be over-ruled. Idle old man,
That still would manage those authorities
That he hath given away! Now, by my life,
Old fools are babes again; and must be used
With checks as flatteries,—when they are seen abused.
Remember what I tell you.

Osw. Well, madam.

Gon. And let his knights have colder looks among you;
What grows of it, no matter; advise your fellows so:
I would breed from hence occasions, and I shall,
That I may speak: I'll write straight to my sister,
To hold my very course. Prepare for dinner. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *A hall in the same.*

Enter KENT, *disguised.*

Kent. If but as well I other accents borrow,
That can my speech defuse, my good intent
May carry through itself to that full issue
For which I razed my likeness. Now, banish'd Kent,
If thou canst serve where thou dost stand condemn'd,
So may it come, thy master, whom thou lovest,
Shall find thee full of labours.

Horns within. *Enter* LEAR, Knights, *and* Attendants.

Lear. Let me not stay a jot for dinner; go get it ready. [*Exit an Attendant.*] How now! what art thou?

Kent. A man, sir.

Lear. What dost thou profess? what wouldst thou with us?

Kent. I do profess to be no less than I seem; to serve him truly that will put me in trust; to love him that is honest; to converse with him that is wise, and says little; to fear judgement; to fight when I cannot choose; and to eat no fish.

Lear. What art thou?

Kent. A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor as the king.

Lear. If thou be as poor for a subject as he is for a king, thou art poor enough. What wouldst thou? 20

Kent. Service.

Lear. Who wouldst thou serve?

Kent. You.

Lear. Dost thou know me, fellow?

Kent. No, sir; but you have that in your countenance which I would fain call master.

Lear. What's that?

Kent. Authority.

Lear. What services canst thou do? 29

Kent. I can keep honest counsel, ride, run, mar a curious tale in telling it, and deliver a plain message bluntly: that which ordinary men are fit for, I am qualified in; and the best of me is diligence.

Lear. How old art thou?

Kent. Not so young, sir, to love a woman for singing, nor so old to dote on her for any thing: I have years on my back forty eight.

Lear. Follow me; thou shalt serve me: if I like thee no worse after dinner, I will not part from thee yet. Dinner, ho, dinner! Where's my knave? my fool? Go you, and call my fool hither. [*Exit an Attendant.*

Enter OSWALD.

You, you, sirrah, where's my daughter? 42

Osw. So please you,— [*Exit.*

Lear. What says the fellow there? Call the clotpoll back. [*Exit a Knight.*] Where's my fool, ho? I think the world's asleep.

Re-enter Knight.

How now! where's that mongrel?

Knight. He says, my lord, your daughter is not well.

Lear. Why came not the slave back to me when I called him?

Knight. Sir, he answered me in the roundest manner, he would not.

Lear. He would not!

Knight. My lord, I know not what the matter is; but, to my judgement, your highness is not entertained with that ceremonious affection as you were wont; there's a great abatement of kindness appears as well in the general dependants as in the duke himself also and your daughter.

Lear. Ha! sayest thou so?

Knight. I beseech you, pardon me, my lord, if I be mistaken; for my duty cannot be silent when I think your highness wronged.

Lear. Thou but rememberest me of mine own conception: I have perceived a most faint neglect of late; which I have rather blamed as mine own jealous curiosity than as a very pretence and purpose of unkindness: I will look further into 't. But where's my fool? I have not seen him this two days.

Knight. Since my young lady's going into France, sir, the fool hath much pined away.

Lear. No more of that; I have noted it well. Go you, and tell my daughter I would speak with her. [*Exit an Attendant.*] Go you, call hither my fool. [*Exit an Attendant.*

Re-enter OSWALD.

O, you sir, you, come you hither, sir: who am I, sir?

Osw. My lady's father.

Lear. 'My lady's father'! my lord's knave: you whoreson dog! you slave! you cur!

Osw. I am none of these, my lord; I beseech your pardon.

Lear. Do you bandy looks with me, you rascal?

[*Striking him.*

Osw. I'll not be struck, my lord.

Kent. Nor tripped neither, you base foot-ball player.

[*Tripping up his heels.*

Lear. I thank thee, fellow; thou servest me, and I'll love thee.

Kent. Come, sir, arise, away! I'll teach you differences: away, away! If you will measure your lubber's length again, tarry: but away! go to; have you wisdom? so.

[*Pushes Oswald out.*

Lear. Now, my friendly knave, I thank thee: there's earnest of thy service. [*Giving Kent money.*

Enter Fool.

Fool. Let me hire him too: here's my coxcomb.

[*Offering Kent his cap.*

Lear. How now, my pretty knave! how dost thou? 90

Fool. Sirrah, you were best take my coxcomb.

Kent. Why, fool?

Fool. Why, for taking one's part that's out of favour: nay, an thou canst not smile as the wind sits, thou'lt catch cold shortly: there, take my coxcomb: why, this fellow has banished two on's daughters, and did the third a blessing against his will; if thou follow him, thou must needs wear my coxcomb. How now, nuncle! Would I had two coxcombs and two daughters!

Lear. Why, my boy? 100

Fool. If I gave them all my living, I'ld keep my coxcombs myself. There's mine; beg another of thy daughters.

Lear. Take heed, sirrah; the whip.

Fool. Truth's a dog must to kennel; he must be whipped out, when Lady the brach may stand by the fire and stink.

Lear. A pestilent gall to me!

Fool. Sirrah, I'll teach thee a speech.

Lear. Do.

Fool. Mark it, nuncle:

Have more than thou showest, 110
Speak less than thou knowest,

Lend less than thou owest,
Ride more than thou goest,
Learn more than thou trowest,
Set less than thou throwest;
And thou shalt have more
Than two tens to a score.

Kent. This is nothing, fool.

Fool. Then 'tis like the breath of an unfee'd lawyer; you gave me nothing for't. Can you make no use of nothing, nuncle?

Lear. Why, no, boy; nothing can be made out of nothing.

Fool. [*To Kent*] Prithee, tell him, so much the rent of his land comes to: he will not believe a fool.

Lear. A bitter fool!

Fool. Dost thou know the difference, my boy, between a bitter fool and a sweet fool?

Lear. No, lad; teach me.

Fool. That lord that counsell'd thee
To give away thy land,
Come place him here by me,
Do thou there for him stand:
The sweet and bitter fool
Will presently appear;
The one in motley here,
The other found out there.

Lear. Dost thou call me fool, boy?

Fool. All thy other titles thou hast given away; that thou wast born with.

Kent. This is not altogether fool, my lord.

Fool. No, faith, lords and great men will not let me; if I had a monopoly out, they would have part on't: and ladies too, they will not let me have all fool to myself; they'll be snatching. Give me an egg, nuncle, and I'll give thee two crowns.

Lear. What two crowns shall they be?

Fool. Why, after I have cut the egg i' the middle, and eat

up the meat, the two crowns of the egg. When thou clovest thy crown i' the middle, and gavest away both parts, thou borest thy ass on thy back o'er the dirt: thou hadst little wit in thy bald crown, when thou gavest thy golden one away. If I speak like myself in this, let him be whipped that first finds it so.

[*Singing*] Fools had ne'er less grace in a year;
For wise men are grown foppish,
They know not how their wits to wear,
Their manners are so apish.

Lear. When were you wont to be so full of songs, sirrah?

Fool. I have used it, nuncle, ever since thou madest thy daughters thy mother: for when thou gavest them the rod, and put'st down thine own breeches, 161

[*Singing*] Then they for sudden joy did weep,
And I for sorrow sung,
That such a king should play bo-peep,
And go the fools among.

Prithee, nuncle, keep a schoolmaster that can teach thy fool to lie: I would fain learn to lie.

Lear. An you lie, sirrah, we'll have you whipped.

Fool. I marvel what kin thou and thy daughters are: they'll have me whipped for speaking true, thou'lt have me whipped for lying; and sometimes I am whipped for holding my peace. I had rather be any kind o' thing than a fool: and yet I would not be thee, nuncle; thou hast pared thy wit o' both sides, and left nothing i' the middle: here comes one o' the parings.

Enter GONERIL.

Lear. How now, daughter! what makes that frontlet on? Methinks you are too much of late i' the frown. 177

Fool. Thou wast a pretty fellow when thou hadst no need to care for her frowning; now thou art an O without a figure: I am better than thou art now; I am a fool, thou

art nothing. [*To Gon.*] Yes, forsooth, I will hold my tongue; so your face bids me, though you say nothing. Mum, mum,

He that keeps nor crust nor crum,
Weary of all, shall want some.

[*Pointing to Lear*] That's a shealed peascod.

Gon. Not only, sir, this your all-licensed fool,
But other of your insolent retinue
Do hourly carp and quarrel; breaking forth
In rank and not-to-be-endured riots. Sir,
I had thought, by making this well known unto you,
To have found a safe redress; but now grow fearful,
By what yourself too late have spoke and done,
That you protect this course, and put it on
By your allowance; which if you should, the fault
Would not 'scape censure, nor the redresses sleep,
Which, in the tender of a wholesome weal,
Might in their working do you that offence,
Which else were shame, that then necessity
Will call discreet proceeding.

Fool. For, you know, nuncle,

The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long,
That it had it head bit off by it young.
So, out went the candle, and we were left darkling.

Lear. Are you our daughter?

Gon. Come, sir,
I would you would make use of that good wisdom,
Whereof I know you are fraught; and put away
These dispositions, that of late transform you
From what you rightly are.

Fool. May not an ass know when the cart draws the horse?
Whoop, Jug! I love thee.

Lear. Doth any here know me? This is not Lear:
Doth Lear walk thus? speak thus? Where are his eyes?
Either his notion weakens, his discernings
Are lethargied—Ha! waking? 'tis not so.
Who is it that can tell me who I am?

Fool. Lear's shadow.

Lear. I would learn that; for, by the marks of sovereignty, knowledge, and reason, I should be false persuaded I had daughters.

Fool. Which they will make an obedient father.

Lear. Your name, fair gentlewoman?

Gon. This admiration, sir, is much o' the savour
Of other your new pranks. I do beseech you
To understand my purposes aright:
As you are old and reverend, you should be wise.
Here do you keep a hundred knights and squires;
Men so disorder'd, so debosh'd and bold,
That this our court, infected with their manners,
Shows like a riotous inn: epicurism and lust
Make it more like a tavern or a brothel
Than a graced palace. The shame itself doth speak
For instant remedy: be then desired
By her, that else will take the thing she begs,
A little to disquantity your train;
And the remainder, that shall still depend,
To be such men as may besort your age,
And know themselves and you.

Lear. Darkness and devils!
Saddle my horses; call my train together.
Degenerate bastard! I'll not trouble thee:
Yet have I left a daughter.

Gon. You strike my people; and your disorder'd rabble
Make servants of their betters.

Enter ALBANY.

Lear. Woe, that too late repents,—[*To Alb.*] O, sir, are you come?
Is it your will? Speak, sir. Prepare my horses.
Ingratitude, thou marble-hearted fiend,
More hideous when thou show'st thee in a child

Than the sea monster!
Alb. Pray, sir, be patient.
Lear. [*To Gon.*] Detested kite! thou liest:
My train are men of choice and rarest parts,
That all particulars of duty know,
And in the most exact regard support
The worships of their name. O most small fault,
How ugly didst thou in Cordelia show!
That, like an engine, wrench'd my frame of nature
From the fix'd place; drew from my heart all love,
And added to the gall. O Lear, Lear, Lear!
Beat at this gate, that let thy folly in, [*Striking his head.*
And thy dear judgement out! Go, go, my people.
Alb. My lord, I am guiltless as I am ignorant
Of what hath moved you.
Lear. It may be so, my lord.
Hear, nature, hear; dear goddess, hear!
Suspend thy purpose, if thou didst intend
To make this creature fruitful!
Into her womb convey sterility!
Dry up in her the organs of increase;
And from her derogate body never spring
A babe to honour her! If she must teem,
Create her child of spleen; that it may live,
And be a thwart disnatured torment to her!
Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth;
With cadent tears fret channels in her cheeks;
Turn all her mother's pains and benefits
To laughter and contempt; that she may feel
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child! Away, away! [*Exit.*
Alb. Now, gods that we adore, whereof comes this?
Gon. Never afflict yourself to know the cause;
But let his disposition have that scope
That dotage gives it.

Re-enter LEAR.

Lear. What, fifty of my followers at a clap!
Within a fortnight!
Alb. What's the matter, sir?
Lear. I'll tell thee: [*To Gon.*] Life and death! I am ashamed
That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus;
That these hot tears, which break from me perforce,
Should make thee worth them. Blasts and fogs upon thee!
The untented woundings of a father's curse
Pierce every sense about thee! Old fond eyes,
Beweep this cause again, I'll pluck ye out,
And cast you, with the waters that you lose,
To temper clay. Yea, is it come to this?
Let it be so: yet have I left a daughter,
Who, I am sure, is kind and comfortable:
When she shall hear this of thee, with her nails
She'll flay thy wolvish visage. Thou shalt find
That I'll resume the shape which thou dost think
I have cast off for ever: thou shalt, I warrant thee.
[*Exeunt Lear, Kent, and Attendants.*
Gon. Do you mark that, my lord?
Alb. I cannot be so partial, Goneril,
To the great love I bear you,—
Gon. Pray you, content. What, Oswald, ho!
[*To the Fool*] You, sir, more knave than fool, after your master.
Fool. Nuncle Lear, nuncle Lear, tarry and take the fool with thee.

A fox, when one has caught her,
And such a daughter,
Should sure to the slaughter,
If my cap would buy a halter:
So the fool follows after. [*Exit.*

Gon. This man hath had good counsel:—a hundred knights!
'Tis politic and safe to let him keep

At point a hundred knights: yes, that, on every dream,
Each buzz, each fancy, each complaint, dislike,
He may enguard his dotage with their powers,
And hold our lives in mercy. Oswald, I say!

Alb. Well, you may fear too far.

Gon. Safer than trust too far:
Let me still take away the harms I fear,
Not fear still to be taken: I know his heart.
What he hath utter'd I have writ my sister:
If she sustain him and his hundred knights,
When I have show'd the unfitness,—

Re-enter OSWALD.

How now, Oswald!
What, have you writ that letter to my sister?

Osw. Yes, madam.

Gon. Take you some company, and away to horse:
Inform her full of my particular fear;
And thereto add such reasons of your own
As may compact it more. Get you gone;
And hasten your return. [*Exit Oswald.*] No, no, my lord,
This milky gentleness and course of yours
Though I condemn not, yet, under pardon,
You are much more attask'd for want of wisdom
Than praised for harmful mildness.

Alb. How far your eyes may pierce I cannot tell:
Striving to better, oft we mar what's well.

Gon. Nay, then—

Alb. Well, well; the event. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *Court before the same.*

Enter LEAR, KENT, *and* Fool.

Lear. Go you before to Gloucester with these letters. Acquaint my daughter no further with any thing you know

than comes from her demand out of the letter. If your diligence be not speedy, I shall be there afore you.

Kent. I will not sleep, my lord, till I have delivered your letter. [*Exit.*

Fool. If a man's brains were in's heels, were't not in danger of kibes?

Lear. Ay, boy.

Fool. Then, I prithee, be merry; thy wit shall ne'er go slip-shod.

Lear. Ha, ha, ha!

Fool. Shalt see thy other daughter will use thee kindly; for though she's as like this as a crab's like an apple, yet I can tell what I can tell.

Lear. Why, what canst thou tell, my boy?

Fool. She will taste as like this as a crab does to a crab. Thou canst tell why one's nose stands i' the middle on's face?

Lear. No.

Fool. Why, to keep one's eyes of either side's nose; that what a man cannot smell out, he may spy into.

Lear. I did her wrong—

Fool. Canst tell how an oyster makes his shell?

Lear. No.

Fool. Nor I neither; but I can tell why a snail has a house.

Lear. Why?

Fool. Why, to put his head in; not to give it away to his daughters, and leave his horns without a case.

Lear. I will forget my nature. So kind a father! Be my horses ready?

Fool. Thy asses are gone about 'em. The reason why the seven stars are no more than seven is a pretty reason.

Lear. Because they are not eight?

Fool. Yes, indeed: thou wouldst make a good fool.

Lear. To take't again perforce! Monster ingratitude!

Fool. If thou wert my fool, nuncle, I'ld have thee beaten for being old before thy time.

Lear. How's that? 39

Fool. Thou shouldst not have been old till thou hadst been wise.

Lear. O, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven!
Keep me in temper: I would not be mad!

Enter Gentleman.

How now! are the horses ready?

Gent. Ready, my lord.

Lear. Come, boy. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *The Earl of Gloucester's castle.*

Enter EDMUND, *and* CURAN *meets him.*

Edm. Save thee, Curan.

Cur. And you, sir. I have been with your father, and given him notice that the Duke of Cornwall and Regan his duchess will be here with him this night.

Edm. How comes that?

Cur. Nay, I know not. You have heard of the news abroad; I mean the whispered ones, for they are yet but ear-kissing arguments?

Edm. Not I: pray you, what are they?

Cur. Have you heard of no likely wars toward, 'twixt the Dukes of Cornwall and Albany? 11

Edm. Not a word.

Cur. You may do, then, in time. Fare you well, sir. [*Exit.*

Edm. The duke be here to-night? The better! best!
This weaves itself perforce into my business.
My father hath set guard to take my brother;
And I have one thing, of a queasy question,
Which I must act: briefness and fortune, work!
Brother, a word; descend: brother, I say!

Enter EDGAR.

My father watches: O sir, fly this place;
Intelligence is given where you are hid;
You have now the good advantage of the night:
Have you not spoken 'gainst the Duke of Cornwall?
He's coming hither; now, i' the night, i' the haste,
And Regan with him: have you nothing said
Upon his party 'gainst the Duke of Albany?
Advise yourself.
Edg. I am sure on 't, not a word.
Edm. I hear my father coming: pardon me;
In cunning I must draw my sword upon you:
Draw; seem to defend yourself; now quit you well.
Yield: come before my father. Light, ho, here!
Fly, brother. Torches, torches! So, farewell. [*Exit Edgar.*
Some blood drawn on me would beget opinion
[*Wounds his arm.*
Of my more fierce endeavour: I have seen drunkards
Do more than this in sport. Father, father!
Stop, stop! No help?

Enter GLOUCESTER, *and* Servants *with torches.*

Glou. Now, Edmund, where's the villain?
Edm. Here stood he in the dark, his sharp sword out,
Mumbling of wicked charms, conjuring the moon
To stand auspicious mistress,—
Glou. But where is he?
Edm. Look, sir, I bleed.
Glou. Where is the villain, Edmund?
Edm. Fled this way, sir. When by no means he could—
Glou. Pursue him, ho! Go after. [*Exeunt some Servants.*]
By no means what?
Edm. Persuade me to the murder of your lordship;
But that I told him, the revenging gods
'Gainst parricides did all their thunders bend;

Spoke, with how manifold and strong a bond
The child was bound to the father; sir, in fine,
Seeing how loathly opposite I stood
To his unnatural purpose, in fell motion,
With his prepared sword, he charges home
My unprovided body, lanced mine arm:
But when he saw my best alarum'd spirits,
Bold in the quarrel's right, roused to the encounter,
Or whether gasted by the noise I made,
Full suddenly he fled.

Glou. Let him fly far:
Not in this land shall he remain uncaught;
And found—despatch. The noble duke my master,
My worthy arch and patron, comes to-night:
By his authority I will proclaim it,
That he which finds him shall deserve our thanks,
Bringing the murderous caitiff to the stake;
He that conceals him, death.

Edm. When I dissuaded him from his intent,
And found him pight to do it, with curst speech
I threaten'd to discover him: he replied,
'Thou unpossessing bastard! dost thou think,
If I would stand against thee, would the reposal
Of any trust, virtue, or worth in thee
Make thy words faith'd? No: what I should deny,—
As this I would; ay, though thou didst produce
My very character,—I'ld turn it all
To thy suggestion, plot, and damned practice:
And thou must make a dullard of the world,
If they not thought the profits of my death
Were very pregnant and potential spurs
To make thee seek it.'

Glou. Strong and fasten'd villain!
Would he deny his letter? I never got him. [*Tucket within.*
Hark, the duke's trumpets! I know not why he comes.
All ports I'll bar; the villain shall not 'scape;

The duke must grant me that: besides, his picture
I will send far and near, that all the kingdom
May have due note of him; and of my land,
Loyal and natural boy, I'll work the means
To make thee capable.

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, *and* Attendants.

Corn. How now, my noble friend! since I came hither,
Which I can call but now, I have heard strange news.
Reg. If it be true, all vengeance comes too short
Which can pursue the offender. How dost, my lord?
Glou. O, madam, my old heart is crack'd, is crack'd!
Reg. What, did my father's godson seek your life?
He whom my father named? your Edgar?
Glou. O, lady, lady, shame would have it hid!
Reg. Was he not companion with the riotous knights
That tend upon my father?
Glou. I know not, madam: 'tis too bad, too bad.
Edm. Yes, madam, he was of that consort.
Reg. No marvel, then, though he were ill affected:
'Tis they have put him on the old man's death,
To have the expense and waste of his revenues.
I have this present evening from my sister
Been well inform'd of them; and with such cautions,
That if they come to sojourn at my house,
I'll not be there.
Corn. Nor I, assure thee, Regan.
Edmund, I hear that you have shown your father
A child-like office.
Edm. 'Twas my duty, sir.
Glou. He did bewray his practice; and received
This hurt you see, striving to apprehend him.
Corn. Is he pursued?
Glou. Ay, my good lord.
Corn. If he be taken, he shall never more
Be fear'd of doing harm: make your own purpose,

How in my strength you please. For you, Edmund,
Whose virtue and obedience doth this instant
So much commend itself, you shall be ours:
Natures of such deep trust we shall much need;
You we first seize on.

Edm. I shall serve you, sir,
Truly, however else.

Glou. For him I thank your grace.

Corn. You know not why we came to visit you,—

Reg. Thus out of season, threading dark-eyed night: 120
Occasions, noble Gloucester, of some poise,
Wherein we must have use of your advice:
Our father he hath writ, so hath our sister,
Of differences, which I best thought it fit
To answer from our home; the several messengers
From hence attend despatch. Our good old friend,
Lay comforts to your bosom; and bestow
Your needful counsel to our business,
Which craves the instant use.

Glou. I serve you, madam:
Your graces are right welcome. [*Exeunt.* 130

SCENE II. *Before Gloucester's castle.*

Enter KENT *and* OSWALD, *severally.*

Osw. Good dawning to thee, friend: art of this house?

Kent. Ay.

Osw. Where may we set our horses?

Kent. I' the mire.

Osw. Prithee, if thou lovest me, tell me.

Kent. I love thee not.

Osw. Why, then, I care not for thee.

Kent. If I had thee in Lipsbury pinfold, I would make thee care for me.

Osw. Why dost thou use me thus? I know thee not. 10

Kent. Fellow, I know thee.

Osw. What dost thou know me for?

Kent. A knave; a rascal; an eater of broken meats; a base, proud, shallow, beggarly, three-suited, hundred-pound, filthy, worsted-stocking knave; a lily-livered, action-taking knave, a glass-gazing, superserviceable, finical rogue; one-trunk-inheriting slave; one whom I will beat into clamorous whining, if thou deniest the least syllable of thy addition.

Osw. Why, what a monstrous fellow art thou, thus to rail on one that is neither known of thee nor knows thee! 20

Kent. What a brazen-faced varlet art thou, to deny thou knowest me! Is it two days ago since I tripped up thy heels, and beat thee before the king? Draw, you rogue: for, though it be night, yet the moon shines; I'll make a sop o' the moonshine of you: draw, you cullionly barber-monger, draw. [*Drawing his sword.*

Osw. Away! I have nothing to do with thee.

Kent. Draw, you rascal: you come with letters against the king; and take vanity the puppet's part against the royalty of her father: draw, you rogue, or I'll so carbonado your shanks: draw, you rascal; come your ways. 31

Osw. Help, ho! murder! help!

Kent. Strike, you slave; stand, rogue, stand; you neat slave, strike. [*Beating him.*

Osw. Help, ho! murder! murder!

Enter EDMUND, *with his rapier drawn*, CORNWALL, REGAN, GLOUCESTER, *and* Servants.

Edm. How now! What's the matter?

Kent. With you, goodman boy, an you please: come, I'll flesh ye; come on, young master.

Glou. Weapons! arms! What's the matter here?

Corn. Keep peace, upon your lives: 40

He dies that strikes again. What is the matter?

Reg. The messengers from our sister and the king.

Corn. What is your difference? speak.

Osw. I am scarce in breath, my lord.

Kent. No marvel, you have so bestirred your valour. You cowardly rascal, nature disclaims in thee: a tailor made thee.

Corn. Thou art a strange fellow: a tailor make a man?

Kent. Ay, a tailor, sir: a stone-cutter or a painter could not have made him so ill, though he had been but two hours at the trade.

Corn. Speak yet, how grew your quarrel?

Osw. This ancient ruffian, sir, whose life I have spared at suit of his gray beard,—

Kent. Thou zed! thou unnecessary letter! My lord, if you will give me leave, I will tread this unbolted villain into mortar. Spare my gray beard, you wagtail?

Corn. Peace, sirrah!
You beastly knave, know you no reverence?

Kent. Yes, sir; but anger hath a privilege.

Corn. Why art thou angry?

Kent. That such a slave as this should wear a sword,
Who wears no honesty. Such smiling rogues as these,
Like rats, oft bite the holy cords a-twain
Which are too intrinse t' unloose; smooth every passion
That in the natures of their lords rebel;
Bring oil to fire, snow to their colder moods;
Renege, affirm, and turn their halcyon beaks
With every gale and vary of their masters,
Knowing nought, like dogs, but following.
A plague upon your epileptic visage!
Smile you my speeches, as I were a fool?
Goose, if I had you upon Sarum plain,
I'ld drive ye cackling home to Camelot.

Corn. What, art thou mad, old fellow?

Glou. How fell you out? say that.

Kent. No contraries hold more antipathy

Than I and such a knave.

Corn. Why dost thou call him knave? What's his offence?

Kent. His countenance likes me not.

Corn. No more, perchance, does mine, nor his, nor hers.

Kent. Sir, 'tis my occupation to be plain:
I have seen better faces in my time
Than stands on any shoulder that I see
Before me at this instant.

Corn. This is some fellow,
Who, having been praised for bluntness, doth affect
A saucy roughness, and constrains the garb
Quite from his nature: he cannot flatter, he,
An honest mind and plain, he must speak truth!
An they will take it, so; if not, he's plain.
These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness
Harbour more craft and more corrupter ends
Than twenty silly ducking observants
That stretch their duties nicely.

Kent. Sir, in good sooth, in sincere verity,
Under the allowance of your great aspect,
Whose influence, like the wreath of radiant fire
On flickering Phœbus' front,—

Corn. What mean'st by this?

Kent. To go out of my dialect, which you discommend so much. I know, sir, I am no flatterer: he that beguiled you in a plain accent was a plain knave; which for my part I will not be, though I should win your displeasure to entreat me to't.

Corn. What was the offence you gave him?

Osw. I never gave him any:
It pleased the king his master very late
To strike at me, upon his misconstruction;
When he, conjunct, and flattering his displeasure,
Tripp'd me behind; being down, insulted, rail'd,
And put upon him such a deal of man,
That worthied him, got praises of the king

For him attempting who was self-subdued ;
And, in the fleshment of this dread exploit,
Drew on me here again.
Kent. None of these rogues and cowards
But Ajax is their fool.
Corn. Fetch forth the stocks !
You stubborn ancient knave, you reverend braggart,
We 'll teach you—
Kent. Sir, I am too old to learn :
Call not your stocks for me : I serve the king ;
On whose employment I was sent to you :
You shall do small respect, show too bold malice
Against the grace and person of my master,
Stocking his messenger.
Corn. Fetch forth the stocks ! As I have life and honour,
There shall he sit till noon.
Reg. Till noon ! till night, my lord ; and all night too.
Kent. Why, madam, if I were your father's dog,
You should not use me so.
Reg. Sir, being his knave, I will.
Corn. This is a fellow of the self-same colour
Our sister speaks of. Come, bring away the stocks !
[*Stocks brought out.*
Glou. Let me beseech your grace not to do so :
His fault is much, and the good king his master
Will check him for 't : your purposed low correction
Is such as basest and contemned'st wretches
For pilferings and most common trespasses
Are punish'd with : the king must take it ill,
That he 's so slightly valued in his messenger,
Should have him thus restrain'd.
Corn. I 'll answer that.
Reg. My sister may receive it much more worse,
To have her gentleman abused, assaulted,
For following her affairs. Put in his legs.
[*Kent is put in the stocks.*

Come, my good lord, away.

[*Exeunt all but Gloucester and Kent.*

Glou. I am sorry for thee, friend; 'tis the duke's pleasure,
Whose disposition, all the world well knows,
Will not be rubb'd nor stopp'd: I'll entreat for thee.

Kent. Pray, do not, sir: I have watched and travell'd hard;
Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle.
A good man's fortune may grow out at heels:
Give you good morrow!

Glou. The duke's to blame in this; 'twill be ill taken.

[*Exit.*

Kent. Good king, that must approve the common saw,
Thou out of heaven's benediction comest
To the warm sun!
Approach, thou beacon to this under globe,
That by thy comfortable beams I may
Peruse this letter! Nothing almost sees miracles
But misery: I know 'tis from Cordelia,
Who hath most fortunately been inform'd
Of my obscured course; and shall find time
From this enormous state, seeking to give
Losses their remedies. All weary and o'erwatch'd,
Take vantage, heavy eyes, not to behold
This shameful lodging.
Fortune, good night: smile once more; turn thy wheel!

[*Sleeps.*

SCENE III. *A wood.*

Enter EDGAR.

Edg. I heard myself proclaim'd;
And by the happy hollow of a tree
Escaped the hunt. No port is free; no place,
That guard, and most unusual vigilance,
Does not attend my taking. Whiles I may 'scape,

I will preserve myself: and am bethought
To take the basest and most poorest shape
That ever penury, in contempt of man,
Brought near to beast: my face I'll grime with filth;
Blanket my loins; elf all my hair in knots;
And with presented nakedness out-face
The winds and persecutions of the sky.
The country gives me proof and precedent
Of Bedlam beggars, who, with roaring voices,
Strike in their numb'd and mortified bare arms
Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary;
And with this horrible object, from low farms,
Poor pelting villages, sheep-cotes, and mills,
Sometime with lunatic bans, sometime with prayers,
Enforce their charity. Poor Turlygod! poor Tom!
That's something yet: Edgar I nothing am. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *Before Gloucester's castle. Kent in the stocks.*

Enter LEAR, Fool, *and* Gentleman.

Lear. 'Tis strange that they should so depart from home,
And not send back my messenger.
Gent. As I learn'd,
The night before there was no purpose in them
Of this remove.
Kent. Hail to thee, noble master!
Lear. Ha!
Makest thou this shame thy pastime?
Kent. No, my lord.
Fool. Ha, ha! he wears cruel garters. Horses are tied by the heads, dogs and bears by the neck, monkeys by the loins, and men by the legs: when a man's over-lusty at legs, then he wears wooden nether-stocks.
Lear. What's he that hath so much thy place mistook
To set thee here?

Kent. It is both he and she;
Your son and daughter.
Lear. No.
Kent. Yes.
Lear. No, I say.
Kent. I say, yea.
Lear. No, no, they would not.
Kent. Yes, they have.
Lear. By Jupiter, I swear, no.
Kent. By Juno, I swear, ay.
Lear. They durst not do't;
They could not, would not do't; 'tis worse than murder,
To do upon respect such violent outrage:
Resolve me, with all modest haste, which way
Thou mightst deserve, or they impose, this usage,
Coming from us.
Kent. My lord, when at their home
I did commend your highness' letters to them,
Ere I was risen from the place that show'd
My duty kneeling, came there a reeking post,
Stew'd in his haste, half breathless, panting forth
From Goneril his mistress salutations;
Deliver'd letters, spite of intermission,
Which presently they read: on whose contents,
They summon'd up their meiny, straight took horse;
Commanded me to follow, and attend
The leisure of their answer; gave me cold looks:
And meeting here the other messenger,
Whose welcome, I perceived, had poison'd mine,—
Being the very fellow that of late
Display'd so saucily against your highness,—
Having more man than wit about me, drew:
He raised the house with loud and coward cries.
Your son and daughter found this trespass worth
The shame which here it suffers.
Fool. Winter's not gone yet, if the wild-geese fly that way.

Fathers that wear rags
Do make their children blind;
But fathers that bear bags
Shall see their children kind.

But, for all this, thou shalt have as many dolours for thy daughters as thou canst tell in a year.

Lear. O, how this mother swells up toward my heart!
Hysterica passio, down, thou climbing sorrow,
Thy element's below! Where is this daughter?

Kent. With the earl, sir, here within.

Lear. Follow me not;
Stay here. [*Exit.*

Gent. Made you no more offence but what you speak of?

Kent. None.
How chance the king comes with so small a train?

Fool. An thou hadst been set i' the stocks for that question, thou hadst well deserved it.

Kent. Why, fool?

Fool. We'll set thee to school to an ant, to teach thee there's no labouring i' the winter. All that follow their noses are led by their eyes but blind men; and there's not a nose among twenty but can smell him that's stinking. Let go thy hold when a great wheel runs down a hill, lest it break thy neck with following it; but the great one that goes up the hill, let him draw thee after. When a wise man gives thee better counsel, give me mine again: I would have none but knaves follow it, since a fool gives it.

That sir which serves and seeks for gain,
And follows but for form,
Will pack when it begins to rain,
And leave thee in the storm.
But I will tarry; the fool will stay,
And let the wise man fly:
The knave turns fool that runs away;
The fool no knave, perdy.

Kent. Where learned you this, fool?

Fool. Not i' the stocks, fool.

Re-enter LEAR, *with* GLOUCESTER.

Lear. Deny to speak with me? They are sick? they are weary?
They have travell'd all the night? Mere fetches;
The images of revolt and flying off.
Fetch me a better answer.
Glou. My dear lord,
You know the fiery quality of the duke;
How unremoveable and fix'd he is
In his own course.
Lear. Vengeance! plague! death! confusion!
Fiery? what quality? Why, Gloucester, Gloucester,
I 'ld speak with the Duke of Cornwall and his wife.
Glou. Well, my good lord, I have inform'd them so.
Lear. Inform'd them! Dost thou understand me, man?
Glou. Ay, my good lord.
Lear. The king would speak with Cornwall; the dear father
Would with his daughter speak, commands her service:
Are they inform'd of this? My breath and blood!
Fiery? the fiery duke? Tell the hot duke that—
No, but not yet: may be he is not well:
Infirmity doth still neglect all office
Whereto our health is bound; we are not ourselves
When nature, being oppress'd, commands the mind
To suffer with the body: I 'll forbear;
And am fall'n out with my more headier will,
To take the indisposed and sickly fit
For the sound man. Death on my state! wherefore
[*Looking on Kent.*
Should he sit here? This act persuades me
That this remotion of the duke and her
Is practice only. Give me my servant forth.
Go tell the duke and 's wife I 'ld speak with them,

Now, presently: bid them come forth and hear me,
Or at their chamber-door I'll beat the drum
Till it cry sleep to death.

Glou. I would have all well betwixt you. [*Exit.*

Lear. O me, my heart, my rising heart! but, down!

Fool. Cry to it, nuncle, as the cockney did to the eels when she put 'em i' the paste alive; she knapped 'em o' the coxcombs with a stick, and cried 'Down, wantons, down!' 'Twas her brother that, in pure kindness to his horse, buttered his hay.

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GLOUCESTER, *and* Servants.

Lear. Good morrow to you both.

Corn. Hail to your grace!

[*Kent is set at liberty.*

Reg. I am glad to see your highness.

Lear. Regan, I think you are; I know what reason
I have to think so: if thou shouldst not be glad,
I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb,
Sepulchring an adultress. [*To Kent*] O, are you free?
Some other time for that. Beloved Regan,
Thy sister's naught: O Regan, she hath tied
Sharp-tooth'd unkindness, like a vulture, here:

[*Points to his heart.*

I can scarce speak to thee; thou'lt not believe
With how depraved a quality—O Regan!

Reg. I pray you, sir, take patience: I have hope
You less know how to value her desert
Than she to scant her duty.

Lear. Say, how is that?

Reg. I cannot think my sister in the least
Would fail her obligation: if, sir, perchance
She have restrain'd the riots of your followers,
'Tis on such ground, and to such wholesome end,
As clears her from all blame.

Lear. My curses on her!

Reg. O, sir, you are old ;
Nature in you stands on the very verge
Of her confine : you should be ruled and led
By some discretion, that discerns your state
Better than you yourself. Therefore, I pray you,
That to our sister you do make return ;
Say you have wrong'd her, sir.
Lear. Ask her forgiveness ?
Do you but mark how this becomes the house :
' Dear daughter, I confess that I am old ; [*Kneeling.*
Age is unnecessary : on my knees I beg
That you 'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and food.'
Reg. Good sir, no more ; these are unsightly tricks :
Return you to my sister.
Lear. [*Rising*] Never, Regan :
She hath abated me of half my train ;
Look'd black upon me ; struck me with her tongue,
Most serpent-like, upon the very heart :
All the stored vengeances of heaven fall
On her ingrateful top ! Strike her young bones,
You taking airs, with lameness !
Corn. Fie, sir, fie !
Lear. You nimble lightnings, dart your blinding flames
Into her scornful eyes ! Infect her beauty,
You fen-suck'd fogs, drawn by the powerful sun,
To fall and blast her pride !
Reg. O the blest gods ! so will you wish on me,
When the rash mood is on.
Lear. No, Regan, thou shalt never have my curse :
Thy tender-hefted nature shall not give
Thee o'er to harshness : her eyes are fierce ; but thine
Do comfort and not burn. 'Tis not in thee
To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train,
To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes,
And in conclusion to oppose the bolt
Against my coming in : thou better know'st

The offices of nature, bond of childhood,
Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude;
Thy half o' the kingdom hast thou not forgot,
Wherein I thee endow'd.
Reg. Good sir, to the purpose.
Lear. Who put my man i' the stocks? [*Tucket within.*
Corn. What trumpet 's that?
Reg. I know 't, my sister's: this approves her letter,
That she would soon be here.

Enter OSWALD.

Is your lady come?
Lear. This is a slave, whose easy-borrow'd pride
Dwells in the fickle grace of her he follows.
Out, varlet, from my sight!
Corn. What means your grace?
Lear. Who stock'd my servant? Regan, I have good hope
Thou didst not know on 't. Who comes here? O heavens,

Enter GONERIL.

If you do love old men, if your sweet sway
Allow obedience, if yourselves are old,
Make it your cause; send down, and take my part!
[*To Gon.*] Art not ashamed to look upon this beard?
O Regan, wilt thou take her by the hand?
Gon. Why not by the hand, sir? How have I offended?
All 's not offence that indiscretion finds
And dotage terms so.
Lear. O sides, you are too tough;
Will you yet hold? How came my man i' the stocks?
Corn. I set him there, sir: but his own disorders
Deserved much less advancement.
Lear. You! did you?
Reg. I pray you, father, being weak, seem so.
If, till the expiration of your month,
You will return and sojourn with my sister,

Dismissing half your train, come then to me:
I am now from home, and out of that provision
Which shall be needful for your entertainment.
Lear. Return to her, and fifty men dismiss'd?
No, rather I abjure all roofs, and choose
To wage against the enmity o' the air;
To be a comrade with the wolf and owl,—
Necessity's sharp pinch! Return with her?
Why, the hot-blooded France, that dowerless took
Our youngest born, I could as well be brought
To knee his throne, and, squire-like, pension beg
To keep base life afoot. Return with her?
Persuade me rather to be slave and sumpter
To this detested groom. [*Pointing at Oswald.*
Gon. At your choice, sir.
Lear. I prithee, daughter, do not make me mad:
I will not trouble thee, my child; farewell:
We'll no more meet, no more see one another:
But yet thou art my flesh, my blood, my daughter;
Or rather a disease that's in my flesh,
Which I must needs call mine: thou art a boil,
A plague-sore, an embossed carbuncle,
In my corrupted blood. But I ll not chide thee;
Let shame come when it will, I do not call it:
I do not bid the thunder-bearer shoot,
Nor tell tales of thee to high-judging Jove:
Mend when thou canst; be better at thy leisure:
I can be patient; I can stay with Regan,
I and my hundred knights.
Reg. Not altogether so:
I look'd not for you yet, nor am provided
For your fit welcome. Give ear, sir, to my sister;
For those that mingle reason with your passion
Must be content to think you old, and so—
But she knows what she does.
Lear. Is this well spoken?

For him attempting who was self-subdued;
And, in the fleshment of this dread exploit,
Drew on me here again.

Kent. None of these rogues and cowards
But Ajax is their fool.

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks!
You stubborn ancient knave, you reverend braggart,
We'll teach you—

Kent. Sir, I am too old to learn:
Call not your stocks for me: I serve the king;
On whose employment I was sent to you:
You shall do small respect, show too bold malice
Against the grace and person of my master,
Stocking his messenger.

Corn. Fetch forth the stocks! As I have life and honour,
There shall he sit till noon.

Reg. Till noon! till night, my lord; and all night too.

Kent. Why, madam, if I were your father's dog,
You should not use me so.

Reg. Sir, being his knave, I will.

Corn. This is a fellow of the self-same colour
Our sister speaks of. Come, bring away the stocks!

[*Stocks brought out.*

Glou. Let me beseech your grace not to do so:
His fault is much, and the good king his master
Will check him for 't: your purposed low correction
Is such as basest and contemned'st wretches
For pilferings and most common trespasses
Are punish'd with: the king must take it ill,
That he 's so slightly valued in his messenger,
Should have him thus restrain'd.

Corn. I 'll answer that.

Reg. My sister may receive it much more worse,
To have her gentleman abused, assaulted,
For following her affairs. Put in his legs.

[*Kent is put in the stocks.*

Come, my good lord, away.

[*Exeunt all but Gloucester and Kent.*

Glou. I am sorry for thee, friend; 'tis the duke's pleasure,
Whose disposition, all the world well knows,
Will not be rubb'd nor stopp'd: I'll entreat for thee.

Kent. Pray, do not, sir: I have watched and travell'd hard;
Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle.
A good man's fortune may grow out at heels:
Give you good morrow!

Glou. The duke's to blame in this; 'twill be ill taken.

[*Exit.*

Kent. Good king, that must approve the common saw,
Thou out of heaven's benediction comest
To the warm sun!
Approach, thou beacon to this under globe,
That by thy comfortable beams I may
Peruse this letter! Nothing almost sees miracles
But misery: I know 'tis from Cordelia,
Who hath most fortunately been inform'd
Of my obscured course; and shall find time
From this enormous state, seeking to give
Losses their remedies. All weary and o'erwatch'd,
Take vantage, heavy eyes, not to behold
This shameful lodging.
Fortune, good night: smile once more; turn thy wheel!

[*Sleeps.*

SCENE III. *A wood.*

Enter EDGAR.

Edg. I heard myself proclaim'd;
And by the happy hollow of a tree
Escaped the hunt. No port is free; no place,
That guard, and most unusual vigilance,
Does not attend my taking. Whiles I may 'scape,

I will preserve myself: and am bethought
To take the basest and most poorest shape
That ever penury, in contempt of man,
Brought near to beast: my face I'll grime with filth;
Blanket my loins; elf all my hair in knots;
And with presented nakedness out-face
The winds and persecutions of the sky.
The country gives me proof and precedent
Of Bedlam beggars, who, with roaring voices,
Strike in their numb'd and mortified bare arms
Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary;
And with this horrible object, from low farms,
Poor pelting villages, sheep-cotes, and mills,
Sometime with lunatic bans, sometime with prayers,
Enforce their charity. Poor Turlygod! poor Tom!
That's something yet: Edgar I nothing am. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *Before Gloucester's castle. Kent in the stocks.*

Enter LEAR, Fool, *and* Gentleman.

Lear. 'Tis strange that they should so depart from home,
And not send back my messenger.
Gent. As I learn'd,
The night before there was no purpose in them
Of this remove.
Kent. Hail to thee, noble master!
Lear. Ha!
Makest thou this shame thy pastime?
Kent. No, my lord.
Fool. Ha, ha! he wears cruel garters. Horses are tied by the heads, dogs and bears by the neck, monkeys by the loins, and men by the legs: when a man's over-lusty at legs, then he wears wooden nether-stocks.
Lear. What's he that hath so much thy place mistook
To set thee here?

Kent. It is both he and she;
Your son and daughter.
Lear. No.
Kent. Yes.
Lear. No, I say.
Kent. I say, yea.
Lear. No, no, they would not.
Kent. Yes, they have.
Lear. By Jupiter, I swear, no.
Kent. By Juno, I swear, ay.
Lear. They durst not do't;
They could not, would not do't; 'tis worse than murder,
To do upon respect such violent outrage:
Resolve me, with all modest haste, which way
Thou mightst deserve, or they impose, this usage,
Coming from us.
Kent. My lord, when at their home
I did commend your highness' letters to them,
Ere I was risen from the place that show'd
My duty kneeling, came there a reeking post,
Stew'd in his haste, half breathless, panting forth
From Goneril his mistress salutations;
Deliver'd letters, spite of intermission,
Which presently they read: on whose contents,
They summon'd up their meiny, straight took horse;
Commanded me to follow, and attend
The leisure of their answer; gave me cold looks:
And meeting here the other messenger,
Whose welcome, I perceived, had poison'd mine,—
Being the very fellow that of late
Display'd so saucily against your highness,—
Having more man than wit about me, drew:
He raised the house with loud and coward cries.
Your son and daughter found this trespass worth
The shame which here it suffers.
Fool. Winter's not gone yet, if the wild-geese fly that way.

Fathers that wear rags
Do make their children blind;
But fathers that bear bags
Shall see their children kind.
But, for all this, thou shalt have as many dolours for thy daughters as thou canst tell in a year.

Lear. O, how this mother swells up toward my heart!
Hysterica passio, down, thou climbing sorrow,
Thy element's below! Where is this daughter?

Kent. With the earl, sir, here within.

Lear. Follow me not;
Stay here. [*Exit.*

Gent. Made you no more offence but what you speak of?

Kent. None.
How chance the king comes with so small a train?

Fool. An thou hadst been set i' the stocks for that question, thou hadst well deserved it.

Kent. Why, fool?

Fool. We'll set thee to school to an ant, to teach thee there's no labouring i' the winter. All that follow their noses are led by their eyes but blind men; and there's not a nose among twenty but can smell him that's stinking. Let go thy hold when a great wheel runs down a hill, lest it break thy neck with following it; but the great one that goes up the hill, let him draw thee after. When a wise man gives thee better counsel, give me mine again: I would have none but knaves follow it, since a fool gives it.

That sir which serves and seeks for gain,
And follows but for form,
Will pack when it begins to rain,
And leave thee in the storm.
But I will tarry; the fool will stay,
And let the wise man fly:
The knave turns fool that runs away;
The fool no knave, perdy.

Kent. Where learned you this, fool?

Fool. Not i' the stocks, fool.

Re-enter LEAR, *with* GLOUCESTER.

Lear. Deny to speak with me? They are sick? they are weary?
They have travell'd all the night? Mere fetches;
The images of revolt and flying off.
Fetch me a better answer.
Glou. My dear lord,
You know the fiery quality of the duke;
How unremoveable and fix'd he is
In his own course.
Lear. Vengeance! plague! death! confusion!
Fiery? what quality? Why, Gloucester, Gloucester,
I 'ld speak with the Duke of Cornwall and his wife.
Glou. Well, my good lord, I have inform'd them so.
Lear. Inform'd them! Dost thou understand me, man?
Glou. Ay, my good lord.
Lear. The king would speak with Cornwall; the dear father
Would with his daughter speak, commands her service:
Are they inform'd of this? My breath and blood!
Fiery? the fiery duke? Tell the hot duke that—
No, but not yet: may be he is not well:
Infirmity doth still neglect all office
Whereto our health is bound; we are not ourselves
When nature, being oppress'd, commands the mind
To suffer with the body: I 'll forbear;
And am fall'n out with my more headier will,
To take the indisposed and sickly fit
For the sound man. Death on my state! wherefore
[*Looking on Kent.*
Should he sit here? This act persuades me
That this remotion of the duke and her
Is practice only. Give me my servant forth.
Go tell the duke and 's wife I 'ld speak with them,

Gent. Give me your hand: have you no more to say?
Kent. Few words, but, to effect, more than all yet;
That, when we have found the king,—in which your pain
That way, I'll this,—he that first lights on him
Holla the other. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II. *Another part of the heath. Storm still.*

Enter LEAR *and* Fool.

Lear. Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!
You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout
Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!
You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,
Vaunt-couriers to oak-cleaving thunderbolts,
Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,
Smite flat the thick rotundity o' the world!
Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once,
That make ingrateful man!
Fool. O nuncle, court holy-water in a dry house is better than this rain-water out o' door. Good nuncle, in, and ask thy daughters' blessing: here's a night pities neither wise man nor fool.
Lear. Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire! spout, rain!
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters:
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;
I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children,
You owe me no subscription: then let fall
Your horrible pleasure; here I stand, your slave,
A poor, infirm, weak, and despised old man:
But yet I call you servile ministers,
That have with two pernicious daughters join'd
Your high engender'd battles 'gainst a head
So old and white as this. O! O! 'tis foul!
Fool. He that has a house to put's head in has a good head-piece.

The man that makes his toe
What he his heart should make
Shall of a corn cry woe,
And turn his sleep to wake.

For there was never yet fair woman but she made mouths in a glass.

Lear. No, I will be the pattern of all patience; I will say nothing.

Enter KENT.

Kent. Who's there?

Fool. Marry, here's a wise man and a fool.

Kent. Alas, sir, are you here? things that love night
Love not such nights as these; the wrathful skies
Gallow the very wanderers of the dark,
And make them keep their caves: since I was man,
Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,
Such groans of roaring wind and rain, I never
Remember to have heard: man's nature cannot carry
The affliction nor the fear.

Lear. Let the great gods,
That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,
That hast within thee undivulged crimes,
Unwhipp'd of justice: hide thee, thou bloody hand;
Thou perjured, and thou simular man of virtue
That art incestuous: caitiff, to pieces shake,
That under covert and convenient seeming
Hast practised on man's life: close pent-up guilts,
Rive your concealing continents, and cry
These dreadful summoners grace. I am a man
More sinn'd against than sinning.

Kent. Alack, bare-headed!
Gracious my lord, hard by here is a hovel;
Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the tempest:

Repose you there; while I to this hard house—
More harder than the stones whereof 'tis raised;
Which even but now, demanding after you,
Denied me to come in—return, and force
Their scanted courtesy.
Lear. My wits begin to turn.
Come on, my boy: how dost, my boy? art cold?
I am cold myself. Where is this straw, my fellow?
The art of our necessities is strange,
That can make vile things precious. Come, your hovel.
Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart
That's sorry yet for thee.
Fool. [*Singing*] He that has and a little tiny wit,—
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,—
Must make content with his fortunes fit,
For the rain it raineth every day.
Lear. True, my good boy. Come, bring us to this hovel.
[*Exeunt Lear and Kent.*
Fool. I'll speak a prophecy ere I go:
When priests are more in word than matter;
When brewers mar their malt with water;
When nobles are their tailors' tutors;
No heretics burn'd, but wenches' suitors;
When every case in law is right;
No squire in debt, nor no poor knight;
When slanders do not live in tongues;
Nor cutpurses come not to throngs;
Then shall the realm of Albion
Come to great confusion:
Then comes the time, who lives to see't,
That going shall be used with feet.
This prophecy Merlin shall make; for I live before his time.
[*Exit.*

SCENE III. *Gloucester's castle.*

Enter GLOUCESTER *and* EDMUND.

Glou. Alack, alack, Edmund, I like not this unnatural dealing. When I desired their leave that I might pity him, they took from me the use of mine own house; charged me, on pain of their perpetual displeasure, neither to speak of him, entreat for him, nor any way sustain him.

Edm. Most savage and unnatural!

Glou. Go to; say you nothing. There's a division betwixt the dukes; and a worse matter than that: I have received a letter this night: 'tis dangerous to be spoken; I have locked the letter in my closet: these injuries the king now bears will be revenged home; there's part of a power already footed: we must incline to the king. I will seek him, and privily relieve him: go you and maintain talk with the duke, that my charity be not of him perceived: if he ask for me, I am ill, and gone to bed. Though I die for it, as no less is threatened me, the king my old master must be relieved. There is some strange thing toward, Edmund; pray you, be careful. [*Exit.*

Edm. This courtesy, forbid thee, shall the duke
Instantly know; and of that letter too: 20
This seems a fair deserving, and must draw me
That which my father loses; no less than all:
The younger rises when the old doth fall. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV. *The heath. Before a hovel.*

Enter LEAR, KENT, *and* Fool.

Kent. Here is the place, my lord; good my lord, enter:
The tyranny of the open night's too rough
For nature to endure. [*Storm still.*

Lear. Let me alone.

Kent. Good my lord, enter here.

Lear. Wilt break my heart?
Kent. I had rather break mine own. Good my lord, enter.
Lear. Thou think'st 'tis much that this contentious storm
Invades us to the skin: so 'tis to thee;
But where the greater malady is fix'd,
The lesser is scarce felt. Thou 'ldst shun a bear;
But if thy flight lay toward the raging sea,
Thou 'ldst meet the bear i' the mouth. When the mind 's free.
The body 's delicate: the tempest in my mind
Doth from my senses take all feeling else
Save what beats there. Filial ingratitude!
Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand
For lifting food to 't? But I will punish home:
No, I will weep no more. In such a night
To shut me out! Pour on; I will endure.
In such a night as this! O Regan, Goneril!
Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all,—
O, that way madness lies; let me shun that;
No more of that.
Kent. Good my lord, enter here.
Lear. Prithee, go in thyself; seek thine own ease:
This tempest will not give me leave to ponder
On things would hurt me more. But I 'll go in.
[*To the Fool*] In, boy; go first. You houseless poverty,—
Nay, get thee in. I 'll pray, and then I 'll sleep. [*Fool goes in.*
Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
From seasons such as these? O, I have ta'en
Too little care of this! Take physic, pomp;
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,
And show the heavens more just.
Edg. [*Within*] Fathom and half, fathom and half! Poor Tom! [*The Fool runs out from the hovel.*

Fool. Come not in here, nuncle, here's a spirit. Help me, help me!

Kent. Give me thy hand. Who's there?

Fool. A spirit, a spirit: he says his name's poor Tom.

Kent. What art thou that dost grumble there i' the straw? Come forth.

Enter EDGAR *disguised as a madman.*

Edg. Away! the foul fiend follows me!
Through the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind.
Hum! go to thy cold bed, and warm thee.

Lear. Hast thou given all to thy two daughters? And art thou come to this?

Edg. Who gives any thing to poor Tom? whom the foul fiend hath led through fire and through flame, and through ford and whirlpool, o'er bog and quagmire; that hath laid knives under his pillow, and halters in his pew; set ratsbane by his porridge; made him proud of heart, to ride on a bay trotting-horse over four-inched bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor. Bless thy five wits! Tom's a-cold,—O, do de, do de, do de. Bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking! Do poor Tom some charity, whom the foul fiend vexes: there could I have him now,—and there,—and there again, and there. [*Storm still.*

Lear. What, have his daughters brought him to this pass? Couldst thou save nothing? Didst thou give them all?

Fool. Nay, he reserved a blanket, else we had been all shamed.

Lear. Now, all the plagues that in the pendulous air
Hang fated o'er men's faults light on thy daughters!

Kent. He hath no daughters, sir.

Lear. Death, traitor! nothing could have subdued nature
To such a lowness but his unkind daughters.
Is it the fashion, that discarded fathers
Should have thus little mercy on their flesh?
Judicious punishment! 'twas this flesh begot

Those pelican daughters.

Edg. Pillicock sat on Pillicock-hill:
Halloo, halloo, loo, loo!

Fool. This cold night will turn us all to fools and madmen.

Edg. Take heed o' the foul fiend: obey thy parents; keep thy word justly; swear not; set not thy sweet heart on proud array. Tom 's a-cold.

Lear. What hast thou been? 80

Edg. A serving-man, proud in heart and mind; that curled my hair; wore gloves in my cap; swore as many oaths as I spake words, and broke them in the sweet face of heaven: wine loved I deeply, dice dearly; and in woman out-paramoured the Turk: false of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand; hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey. Let not the creaking of shoes nor the rustling of silks betray thy poor heart to woman: keep thy pen from lenders' books, and defy the foul fiend.
Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind: 90
Says suum, mun, ha, no, nonny.
Dolphin my boy, my boy, sessa! let him trot by. [*Storm still.*

Lear. Why, thou wert better in thy grave than to answer with thy uncovered body this extremity of the skies. Is man no more than this? Consider him well. Thou owest the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume. Ha! here's three on 's are sophisticated! Thou art the thing itself: unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art. Off, off, you lendings! come, unbutton here. [*Tearing off his clothes.*

Fool. Prithee, nuncle, be contented; 'tis a naughty night to swim in. Look, here comes a walking fire. 102

Enter GLOUCESTER, *with a torch.*

Edg. This is the foul fiend Flibbertigibbet: he begins at

curfew, and walks till the first cock; he gives the web and the pin, squints the eye, and makes the hare-lip; mildews the white wheat, and hurts the poor creature of earth.

S. Withold footed thrice the old;
He met the night-mare, and her nine-fold;
Bid her alight,
And her troth plight,
And, aroint thee, witch, aroint thee!

Kent. How fares your grace?

Lear. What's he?

Kent. Who's there? What is't you seek?

Glou. What are you there? Your names?

Edg. Poor Tom; that eats the swimming frog, the toad, the tadpole, the wall-newt and the water; that in the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages, eats cow-dung for sallets; swallows the old rat and the ditch-dog; drinks the green mantle of the standing pool; who is whipped from tithing to tithing, and stock-punished, and imprisoned; who hath had three suits to his back, six shirts to his body, horse to ride, and weapon to wear;

But mice and rats, and such small deer,
Have been Tom's food for seven long year.

Beware my follower. Peace, Smulkin; peace, thou fiend!

Glou. What, hath your grace no better company?

Edg. The prince of darkness is a gentleman:
Modo he's call'd, and Mahu.

Glou. Our flesh and blood is grown so vile, my lord,
That it doth hate what gets it.

Edg. Poor Tom's a-cold.

Glou. Go in with me: my duty cannot suffer
To obey in all your daughters' hard commands:
Though their injunction be to bar my doors,
And let this tyrannous night take hold upon you,
Yet have I ventured to come seek you out,
And bring you where both fire and food is ready.

Lear. First let me talk with this philosopher.

What is the cause of thunder?
Kent. Good my lord, take his offer; go into the house.
Lear. I'll talk a word with this same learned Theban.
What is your study?
Edg. How to prevent the fiend, and to kill vermin.
Lear. Let me ask you one word in private.
Kent. Importune him once more to go, my lord;
His wits begin to unsettle.
Glou. Canst thou blame him? [*Storm still.*
His daughters seek his death: ah, that good Kent!
He said it would be thus, poor banish'd man!
Thou say'st the king grows mad; I'll tell thee, friend,
I am almost mad myself: I had a son,
Now outlaw'd from my blood; he sought my life,
But lately, very late: I loved him, friend;
No father his son dearer: truth to tell thee,
The grief hath crazed my wits. What a night's this!
I do beseech your grace,—
Lear. O, cry you mercy, sir.
Noble philosopher, your company.
Edg. Tom's a-cold.
Glou. In, fellow, there, into the hovel: keep thee warm.
Lear. Come, let's in all.
Kent. This way, my lord.
Lear. With him;
I will keep still with my philosopher.
Kent. Good my lord, soothe him; let him take the fellow.
Glou. Take him you on.
Kent. Sirrah, come on; go along with us.
Lear. Come, good Athenian.
Glou. No words, no words: hush.
Edg. Child Rowland to the dark tower came,
His word was still,—Fie, foh, and fum,
I smell the blood of a British man. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *Gloucester's castle.*

Enter CORNWALL *and* EDMUND.

Corn. I will have my revenge ere I depart his house.

Edm. How, my lord, I may be censured, that nature thus gives way to loyalty, something fears me to think of.

Corn. I now perceive, it was not altogether your brother's evil disposition made him seek his death; but a provoking merit, set a-work by a reprovable badness in himself.

Edm. How malicious is my fortune, that I must repent to be just! This is the letter he spoke of, which approves him an intelligent party to the advantages of France. O heavens! that this treason were not, or not I the detector!

Corn. Go with me to the duchess. 11

Edm. If the matter of this paper be certain, you have mighty business in hand.

Corn. True or false, it hath made thee earl of Gloucester. Seek out where thy father is, that he may be ready for our apprehension.

Edm. [*Aside*] If I find him comforting the king, it will stuff his suspicion more fully.—I will persevere in my course of loyalty, though the conflict be sore between that and my blood. 20

Corn. I will lay trust upon thee; and thou shalt find a dearer father in my love. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *A chamber in a farmhouse adjoining the castle.*

Enter GLOUCESTER, LEAR, KENT, Fool, *and* EDGAR.

Glou. Here is better than the open air; take it thankfully. I will piece out the comfort with what addition I can: I will not be long from you.

Kent. All the power of his wits have given way to his impatience: the gods reward your kindness! [*Exit Gloucester.*

Edg. Frateretto calls me; and tells me Nero is an angler in the lake of darkness. Pray, innocent, and beware the foul fiend.

Fool. Prithee, nuncle, tell me whether a madman be a gentleman or a yeoman?

Lear. A king, a king!

Fool. No, he's a yeoman that has a gentleman to his son; for he's a mad yeoman that sees his son a gentleman before him.

Lear. To have a thousand with red burning spits
Come hissing in upon 'em,—

Edg. The foul fiend bites my back.

Fool. He's mad that trusts in the tameness of a wolf, a horse's health, a boy's love.

Lear. It shall be done; I will arraign them straight.
[*To Edgar*] Come, sit thou here, most learned justicer;
[*To the Fool*] Thou, sapient sir, sit here. Now, you she foxes!

Edg. Look, where he stands and glares!
Wantest thou eyes at trial, madam?
Come o'er the bourn, Bessy, to me,—

Fool. Her boat hath a leak,
And she must not speak
Why she dares not come over to thee.

Edg. The foul fiend haunts poor Tom in the voice of a nightingale. Hopdance cries in Tom's belly for two white herring. Croak not, black angel; I have no food for thee.

Kent. How do you, sir? Stand you not so amazed:
Will you lie down and rest upon the cushions?

Lear. I'll see their trial first. Bring in the evidence.
[*To Edgar*] Thou robed man of justice, take thy place;
[*To the Fool*] And thou, his yoke-fellow of equity,
Bench by his side: [*To Kent*] you are o' the commission,
Sit you too.

Edg. Let us deal justly.
Sleepest or wakest thou, jolly shepherd?
Thy sheep be in the corn;

And for one blast of thy minikin mouth,
Thy sheep shall take no harm.
Pur! the cat is gray.

Lear. Arraign her first; 'tis Goneril. I here take my oath before this honourable assembly, she kicked the poor king her father.

Fool. Come hither, mistress. Is your name Goneril?

Lear. She cannot deny it.

Fool. Cry you mercy, I took you for a joint-stool.

Lear. And here's another, whose warp'd looks proclaim
What store her heart is made on. Stop her there!
Arms, arms, sword, fire! Corruption in the place!
False justicer, why hast thou let her 'scape?

Edg. Bless thy five wits!

Kent. O pity! Sir, where is the patience now,
That you so oft have boasted to retain?

Edg. [*Aside*] My tears begin to take his part so much,
They'll mar my counterfeiting.

Lear. The little dogs and all,
Tray, Blanch, and Sweet-heart, see, they bark at me.

Edg. Tom will throw his head at them. Avaunt, you curs!

Be thy mouth or black or white,
Tooth that poisons if it bite;
Mastiff, greyhound, mongrel grim,
Hound or spaniel, brach or lym,
Or bobtail tike or trundle-tail,
Tom will make them weep and wail:
For, with throwing thus my head,
Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.

Do de, de, de. Sessa! Come, march to wakes and fairs and market-towns. Poor Tom, thy horn is dry.

Lear. Then let them anatomize Regan; see what breeds about her heart. Is there any cause in nature that makes these hard hearts? [*To Edgar*] You, sir, I entertain for one of my hundred; only I do not like the fashion of your

garments: you will say they are Persian attire; but let them be changed.

Kent. Now, good my lord, lie here and rest awhile.

Lear. Make no noise, make no noise; draw the curtains: so, so, so. We'll go to supper i' the morning. So, so, so.

Fool. And I'll go to bed at noon.

Re-enter GLOUCESTER.

Glou. Come hither, friend: where is the king my master?

Kent. Here, sir; but trouble him not, his wits are gone.

Glou. Good friend, I prithee, take him in thy arms;
I have o'erheard a plot of death upon him:
There is a litter ready; lay him in't,
And drive towards Dover, friend, where thou shalt meet
Both welcome and protection. Take up thy master:
If thou shouldst dally half an hour, his life,
With thine, and all that offer to defend him,
Stand in assured loss: take up, take up;
And follow me, that will to some provision
Give thee quick conduct.

Kent. Oppressed nature sleeps:
This rest might yet have balm'd thy broken sinews,
Which, if convenience will not allow,
Stand in hard cure. [*To the Fool*] Come, help to bear thy master;
Thou must not stay behind.

Glou. Come, come, away.

[*Exeunt all but Edgar.*

Edg. When we our betters see bearing our woes,
We scarcely think our miseries our foes.
Who alone suffers suffers most i' the mind,
Leaving free things and happy shows behind:
But then the mind much sufferance doth o'erskip,
When grief hath mates, and bearing fellowship.
How light and portable my pain seems now,
When that which makes me bend makes the king bow,

He childed as I father'd! Tom, away!
Mark the high noises; and thyself bewray,
When false opinion, whose wrong thought defiles thee,
In thy just proof, repeals and reconciles thee.
What will hap more to-night, safe 'scape the king!
Lurk, lurk. [*Exit.*

SCENE VII. *Gloucester's castle.*

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GONERIL, EDMUND, *and* Servants.

Corn. Post speedily to my lord your husband; show him this letter: the army of France is landed. Seek out the villain Gloucester. [*Exeunt some of the Servants.*

Reg. Hang him instantly.

Gon. Pluck out his eyes.

Corn. Leave him to my displeasure. Edmund, keep you our sister company: the revenges we are bound to take upon your traitorous father are not fit for your beholding. Advise the duke, where you are going, to a most festinate preparation: we are bound to the like. Our posts shall be swift and intelligent betwixt us. Farewell, dear sister: farewell, my lord of Gloucester.

Enter OSWALD.

How now! where's the king?

Osw. My lord of Gloucester hath convey'd him hence:
Some five or six and thirty of his knights,
Hot questrists after him, met him at gate;
Who, with some other of the lords dependants,
Are gone with him towards Dover; where they boast
To have well-armed friends.

Corn. Get horses for your mistress.

Gon. Farewell, sweet lord, and sister.

Corn. Edmund, farewell.

[*Exeunt Goneril, Edmund, and Oswald.*

Go seek the traitor Gloucester,
Pinion him like a thief, bring him before us.
[*Exeunt other Servants.*
Though well we may not pass upon his life
Without the form of justice, yet our power
Shall do a courtesy to our wrath, which men
May blame, but not control. Who 's there? the traitor?

Enter GLOUCESTER, *brought in by two or three.*

Reg. Ingrateful fox! 'tis he.
Corn. Bind fast his corky arms.
Glou. What mean your graces? Good my friends, consider
You are my guests: do me no foul play, friends.
Corn. Bind him, I say. [*Servants bind him.*
Reg. Hard, hard. O filthy traitor!
Glou. Unmerciful lady as you are, I 'm none.
Corn. To this chair bind him. Villain, thou shalt find—
[*Regan plucks his beard.*
Glou. By the kind gods, 'tis most ignobly done
To pluck me by the beard.
Reg. So white, and such a traitor!
Glou. Naughty lady,
These hairs, which thou dost ravish from my chin,
Will quicken, and accuse thee: I am your host:
With robbers' hands my hospitable favours
You should not ruffle thus. What will you do?
Corn. Come, sir, what letters had you late from France?
Reg. Be simple answerer, for we know the truth.
Corn. And what confederacy have you with the traitors
Late footed in the kingdom?
Reg. To whose hands have you sent the lunatic king?
Speak.
Glou. I have a letter guessingly set down,
Which came from one that 's of a neutral heart,
And not from one opposed.

Corn. Cunning.
Reg. And false.
Corn. Where hast thou sent the king?
Glou. To Dover.
Reg. Wherefore to Dover? Wast thou not charged at peril—
Corn. Wherefore to Dover? Let him first answer that.
Glou. I am tied to the stake, and I must stand the course.
Reg. Wherefore to Dover, sir?
Glou. Because I would not see thy cruel nails
Pluck out his poor old eyes; nor thy fierce sister
In his anointed flesh stick boarish fangs.
The sea, with such a storm as his bare head
In hell-black night endured, would have buoy'd up,
And quench'd the stelled fires:
Yet, poor old heart, he holp the heavens to rain.
If wolves had at thy gate howl'd that stern time,
Thou shouldst have said 'Good porter, turn the key,'
All cruelties else subscribed: but I shall see
The winged vengeance overtake such children.
Corn. See 't shalt thou never. Fellows, hold the chair.
Upon these eyes of thine I 'll set my foot.
Glou. He that will think to live till he be old,
Give me some help! O cruel! O you gods!
Reg. One side will mock another; the other too.
Corn. If you see vengeance,—
First Serv. Hold your hand, my lord:
I have served you ever since I was a child;
But better service have I never done you
Than now to bid you hold.
Reg. How now, you dog!
First Serv. If you did wear a beard upon your chin,
I 'd shake it on this quarrel. What do you mean?
Corn. My villain! [*They draw and fight.*
First Serv. Nay, then, come on, and take the chance of anger.

Reg. Give me thy sword. A peasant stand up thus!
[*Takes a sword, and runs at him behind.*
First Serv. O, I am slain! My lord, you have one eye left
To see some mischief on him. O! [*Dies.*
Corn. Lest it see more, prevent it. Out, vile jelly!
Where is thy lustre now?
Glou. All dark and comfortless. Where's my son Edmund?
Edmund, enkindle all the sparks of nature,
To quit this horrid act.
Reg. Out, treacherous villain!
Thou call'st on him that hates thee: it was he
That made the overture of thy treasons to us;
Who is too good to pity thee.
Glou. O my follies! then Edgar was abused.
Kind gods, forgive me that, and prosper him!
Reg. Go thrust him out at gates, and let him smell
His way to Dover. [*Exit one with Gloucester.*] How is 't, my lord? how look you?
Corn. I have received a hurt: follow me, lady.
Turn out that eyeless villain; throw this slave
Upon the dunghill. Regan, I bleed apace:
Untimely comes this hurt: give me your arm.
[*Exit Cornwall, led by Regan.*
Sec. Serv. I'll never care what wickedness I do,
If this man come to good.
Third Serv. If she live long,
And in the end meet the old course of death,
Women will all turn monsters.
Sec. Serv. Let's follow the old earl, and get the Bedlam
To lead him where he would: his roguish madness
Allows itself to any thing.
Third Serv. Go thou: I'll fetch some flax and whites of eggs
To apply to his bleeding face. Now, heaven help him!
[*Exeunt severally.*

ACT. IV.

SCENE I. *The heath.*

Enter EDGAR.

Edg. Yet better thus, and known to be contemn'd,
Than still contemn'd and flatter'd. To be worst,
The lowest and most dejected thing of fortune,
Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear:
The lamentable change is from the best;
The worst returns to laughter. Welcome, then,
Thou unsubstantial air that I embrace!
The wretch that thou hast blown unto the worst
Owes nothing to thy blasts. But who comes here?

Enter GLOUCESTER, *led by an* Old Man.

My father, poorly led? World, world, O world!
But that thy strange mutations make us hate thee,
Life would not yield to age.

Old Man. O, my good lord, I have been your tenant, and your father's tenant, these fourscore years.

Glou. Away, get thee away; good friend, be gone:
Thy comforts can do me no good at all;
Thee they may hurt.

Old Man. Alack, sir, you cannot see your way.

Glou. I have no way, and therefore want no eyes;
I stumbled when I saw: full oft 'tis seen,
Our means secure us, and our mere defects
Prove our commodities. O dear son Edgar,
The food of thy abused father's wrath!
Might I but live to see thee in my touch,
I'ld say I had eyes again!

Old Man. How now! Who's there?

Edg. [*Aside*] O gods! Who is't can say 'I am at the worst'?

I am worse than e'er I was.
Old Man. 'Tis poor mad Tom.
Edg. [*Aside*] And worse I may be yet: the worst is not
So long as we can say 'This is the worst.'
Old Man. Fellow, where goest?
Glou. Is it a beggar man?
Old Man. Madman and beggar too.
Glou. He has some reason, else he could not beg.
I' the last night's storm I such a fellow saw;
Which made me think a man a worm: my son
Came then into my mind; and yet my mind
Was then scarce friends with him: I have heard more since.
As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods,
They kill us for their sport.
Edg. [*Aside*] How should this be?
Bad is the trade that must play fool to sorrow,
Angering itself and others.—Bless thee, master!
Glou. Is that the naked fellow?
Old Man. Ay, my lord.
Glou. Then, prithee, get thee gone: if, for my sake,
Thou wilt o'ertake us, hence a mile or twain,
I' the way toward Dover, do it for ancient love;
And bring some covering for this naked soul,
Who I 'll entreat to lead me.
Old Man. Alack, sir, he is mad.
Glou. 'Tis the times' plague, when madmen lead the blind.
Do as I bid thee, or rather do thy pleasure;
Above the rest, be gone.
Old Man. I 'll bring him the best 'parel that I have,
Come on 't what will. [*Exit.*
Glou. Sirrah, naked fellow,—
Edg. Poor Tom 's a-cold. [*Aside*] I cannot daub it further.
Glou. Come hither, fellow.
Edg. [*Aside*] And yet I must.—Bless thy sweet eyes, they bleed.
Glou. Know'st thou the way to Dover?

Edg. Both stile and gate, horse-way and foot-path. Poor Tom hath been scared out of his good wits: bless thee, good man's son, from the foul fiend! five fiends have been in poor Tom at once; of lust, as Obidicut; Hobbididance, prince of dumbness; Mahu, of stealing; Modo, of murder; Flibbertigibbet, of mopping and mowing, who since possesses chamber-maids and waiting-women. So, bless thee, master!

Glou. Here, take this purse, thou whom the heavens' plagues
Have humbled to all strokes: that I am wretched
Makes thee the happier: heavens, deal so still!
Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man,
That slaves your ordinance, that will not see
Because he doth not feel, feel your power quickly;
So distribution should undo excess,
And each man have enough. Dost thou know Dover?

Edg. Ay, master.

Glou. There is a cliff, whose high and bending head
Looks fearfully in the confined deep:
Bring me but to the very brim of it,
And I'll repair the misery thou dost bear
With something rich about me: from that place
I shall no leading need.

Edg. Give me thy arm:
Poor Tom shall lead thee. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Before the Duke of Albany's palace.*

Enter GONERIL *and* EDMUND.

Gon. Welcome, my lord: I marvel our mild husband
Not met us on the way.

Enter OSWALD.

Now, where's your master?

Osw. Madam, within; but never man so changed.

I told him of the army that was landed;
He smiled at it: I told him you were coming;
His answer was 'The worse:' of Gloucester's treachery,
And of the loyal service of his son,
When I inform'd him, then he call'd me sot,
And told me I had turn'd the wrong side out:
What most he should dislike seems pleasant to him;
What like, offensive.

Gon. [*To Edm.*] Then shall you go no further.
It is the cowish terror of his spirit,
That dares not undertake: he 'll not feel wrongs
Which tie him to an answer. Our wishes on the way
May prove effects. Back, Edmund, to my brother;
Hasten his musters and conduct his powers:
I must change arms at home, and give the distaff
Into my husband's hands. This trusty servant
Shall pass between us: ere long you are like to hear,
If you dare venture in your own behalf,
A mistress's command. Wear this; spare speech;
[*Giving a favour.*
Decline your head: this kiss, if it durst speak,
Would stretch thy spirits up into the air:
Conceive, and fare thee well.

Edm. Yours in the ranks of death.

Gon. My most dear Gloucester
[*Exit Edmund.*
O, the difference of man and man!
To thee a woman's services are due:
My fool usurps my body.

Osw. Madam, here comes my lord.
[*Exit.*

Enter ALBANY.

Gon. I have been worth the whistle.

Alb. O Goneril!
You are not worth the dust which the rude wind

Blows in your face. I fear your disposition:
That nature, which contemns it origin,
Cannot be border'd certain in itself;
She that herself will sliver and disbranch
From her material sap, perforce must wither
And come to deadly use.
Gon. No more; the text is foolish.
Alb. Wisdom and goodness to the vile seem vile:
Filths savour but themselves. What have you done?
Tigers, not daughters, what have you perform'd?
A father, and a gracious aged man,
Whose reverence even the head-lugg'd bear would lick,
Most barbarous, most degenerate! have you madded.
Could my good brother suffer you to do it?
A man, a prince, by him so benefited!
If that the heavens do not their visible spirits
Send quickly down to tame these vile offences,
It will come,
Humanity must perforce prey on itself,
Like monsters of the deep.
Gon. Milk-liver'd man!
That bear'st a cheek for blows, a head for wrongs:
Who hast not in thy brows an eye discerning
Thine honour from thy suffering; that not know'st
Fools do those villains pity who are punish'd
Ere they have done their mischief. Where's thy drum?
France spreads his banners in our noiseless land,
With plumed helm thy state begins to threat;
Whiles thou, a moral fool, sit'st still, and criest
'Alack, why does he so?'
Alb. See thyself, devil!
Proper deformity seems not in the fiend
So horrid as in woman.
Gon. O vain fool!
Alb. Thou changed and self-cover'd thing, for shame,
Be-monster not thy feature. Were't my fitness

To let these hands obey my blood,
They are apt enough to dislocate and tear
Thy flesh and bones: howe'er thou art a fiend,
A woman's shape doth shield thee.
Gon. Marry, your manhood now—

Enter a Messenger.

Alb. What news?
Mess. O, my good lord, the Duke of Cornwall's dead;
Slain by his servant, going to put out
The other eye of Gloucester.
Alb. Gloucester's eyes!
Mess. A servant that he bred, thrill'd with remorse,
Opposed against the act, bending his sword
To his great master; who, thereat enraged,
Flew on him, and amongst them fell'd him dead;
But not without that harmful stroke, which since
Hath pluck'd him after.
Alb. This shows you are above,
You justicers, that these our nether crimes
So speedily can venge! But, O poor Gloucester!
Lost he his other eye?
Mess. Both, both, my lord.
This letter, madam, craves a speedy answer;
'Tis from your sister.
Gon. [*Aside*] One way I like this well;
But being widow, and my Gloucester with her,
May all the building in my fancy pluck
Upon my hateful life: another way,
The news is not so tart.—I'll read, and answer. [*Exit.*
Alb. Where was his son when they did take his eyes?
Mess. Come with my lady hither.
Alb. He is not here.
Mess. No, my good lord; I met him back again.
Alb. Knows he the wickedness?
Mess. Ay, my good lord; 'twas he inform'd against him;

And quit the house on purpose that their punishment
Might have the freer course.
Alb. Gloucester, I live
To thank thee for the love thou show'dst the king,
And to revenge thine eyes. Come hither, friend:
Tell me what more thou know'st. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The French camp near Dover.*

Enter KENT *and a* Gentleman.

Kent. Why the King of France is so suddenly gone back know you the reason?

Gent. Something he left imperfect in the state, which since his coming forth is thought of; which imports to the kingdom so much fear and danger, that his personal return was most required and necessary.

Kent. Who hath he left behind him general?

Gent. The Marshal of France, Monsieur La Far.

Kent. Did your letters pierce the queen to any demonstration of grief?

Gent. Ay, sir; she took them, read them in my presence;
And now and then an ample tear trill'd down
Her delicate cheek: it seem'd she was a queen
Over her passion; who, most rebel-like,
Sought to be king o'er her.
Kent. O, then it moved her.
Gent. Not to a rage: patience and sorrow strove
Who should express her goodliest. You have seen
Sunshine and rain at once: her smiles and tears
Were like a better way: those happy smilets,
That play'd on her ripe lip, seem'd not to know
What guests were in her eyes; which parted thence,
As pearls from diamonds dropp'd. In brief,
Sorrow would be a rarity most beloved,
If all could so become it.
Kent. Made she no verbal question?

Gent. 'Faith, once or twice she heaved the name of 'father'
Pantingly forth, as if it press'd her heart;
Cried 'Sisters! sisters! Shame of ladies! sisters!
Kent! father! sisters! What, i' the storm? i' the night?
Let pity not be believed!' There she shook
The holy water from her heavenly eyes,
And clamour moisten'd: then away she started
To deal with grief alone.
Kent. It is the stars,
The stars above us, govern our conditions;
Else one self mate and mate could not beget
Such different issues. You spoke not with her since?
Gent. No.
Kent. Was this before the king return'd?
Gent. No, since.
Kent. Well, sir, the poor distressed Lear's i' the town;
Who sometime, in his better tune, remembers
What we are come about, and by no means
Will yield to see his daughter.
Gent. Why, good sir?
Kent. A sovereign shame so elbows him: his own unkindness,
That stripp'd her from his benediction, turn'd her
To foreign casualties, gave her dear rights
To his dog-hearted daughters, these things sting
His mind so venomously, that burning shame
Detains him from Cordelia.
Gent. Alack, poor gentleman!
Kent. Of Albany's and Cornwall's powers you heard not?
Gent. 'Tis so, they are afoot.
Kent. Well, sir, I'll bring you to our master Lear,
And leave you to attend him: some dear cause
Will in concealment wrap me up awhile;
When I am known aright, you shall not grieve
Lending me this acquaintance. I pray you, go
Along with me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV. *The same. A tent.*

Enter, with drum and colours, CORDELIA, Doctor, *and* Soldiers.

Cor. Alack, 'tis he: why, he was met even now
As mad as the vex'd sea; singing aloud;
Crown'd with rank fumiter and furrow-weeds,
With bur-docks, hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers,
Darnel, and all the idle weeds that grow
In our sustaining corn. A century send forth;
Search every acre in the high-grown field,
And bring him to our eye. [*Exit an Officer.*] What can man's wisdom
In the restoring his bereaved sense?
He that helps him take all my outward worth.

Doct. There is means, madam:
Our foster-nurse of nature is repose,
The which he lacks; that to provoke in him,
Are many simples operative, whose power
Will close the eye of anguish.

Cor. All blest secrets,
All you unpublish'd virtues of the earth,
Spring with my tears! be aidant and remediate
In the good man's distress! Seek, seek for him;
Lest his ungovern'd rage dissolve the life
That wants the means to lead it.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. News, madam;
The British powers are marching hitherward.

Cor. 'Tis known before; our preparation stands
In expectation of them. O dear father,
It is thy business that I go about;
Therefore great France

My mourning and important tears hath pitied.
No blown ambition doth our arms incite,
But love, dear love, and our aged father's right:
Soon may I hear and see him! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *Gloucester's castle.*

Enter REGAN *and* OSWALD.

Reg. But are my brother's powers set forth?
Osw. Ay, madam.
Reg. Himself in person there?
Osw. Madam, with much ado:
Your sister is the better soldier.
Reg. Lord Edmund spake not with your lord at home?
Osw. No, madam.
Reg. What might import my sister's letter to him?
Osw. I know not, lady.
Reg. 'Faith, he is posted hence on serious matter.
It was great ignorance, Gloucester's eyes being out,
To let him live: where he arrives he moves
All hearts against us: Edmund, I think, is gone,
In pity of his misery, to despatch
His nighted life; moreover, to descry
The strength o' the enemy.
Osw. I must needs after him, madam, with my letter.
Reg. Our troops set forth to-morrow: stay with us;
The ways are dangerous.
Osw. I may not, madam:
My lady charged my duty in this business.
Reg. Why should she write to Edmund? Might not you
Transport her purposes by word? Belike,
Something—I know not what: I'll love thee much,
Let me unseal the letter.
Osw. Madam, I had rather—
Reg. I know your lady does not love her husband;

I am sure of that: and at her late being here
She gave strange œillades and most speaking looks
To noble Edmund. I know you are of her bosom.
Osw. I, madam?
Reg. I speak in understanding; you are, I know't:
Therefore I do advise you, take this note:
My lord is dead; Edmund and I have talk'd;
And more convenient is he for my hand
Than for your lady's: you may gather more.
If you do find him, pray you, give him this;
And when your mistress hears thus much from you,
I pray, desire her call her wisdom to her.
So, fare you well.
If you do chance to hear of that blind traitor,
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off.
Osw. Would I could meet him, madam! I should show
What party I do follow.
Reg. Fare thee well. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *Fields near Dover.*

Enter GLOUCESTER, *and* EDGAR *dressed like a peasant.*

Glou. When shall we come to the top of that same hill?
Edg. You do climb up it now: look, how we labour.
Glou. Methinks the ground is even.
Edg. Horrible steep.
Hark, do you hear the sea?
Glou. No, truly.
Edg. Why, then, your other senses grow imperfect
By your eyes' anguish.
Glou. So may it be, indeed:
Methinks thy voice is alter'd; and thou speak'st
In better phrase and matter than thou didst.
Edg. You're much deceived: in nothing am I changed
But in my garments.

Glou. Methinks you're better spoken.
Edg. Come on, sir; here's the place: stand still. How fearful
And dizzy 'tis, to cast one's eyes so low!
The crows and choughs that wing the midway air
Show scarce so gross as beetles: half way down
Hangs one that gathers samphire, dreadful trade!
Methinks he seems no bigger than his head:
The fishermen, that walk upon the beach,
Appear like mice; and yond tall anchoring bark,
Diminish'd to her cock; her cock, a buoy
Almost too small for sight: the murmuring surge,
That on the unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes,
Cannot be heard so high. I'll look no more;
Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight
Topple down headlong.
Glou. Set me where you stand.
Edg. Give me your hand: you are now within a foot
Of the extreme verge: for all beneath the moon
Would I not leap upright.
Glou. Let go my hand.
Here, friend, 's another purse; in it a jewel
Well worth a poor man's taking: fairies and gods
Prosper it with thee! Go thou farther off;
Bid me farewell, and let me hear thee going.
Edg. Now fare you well, good sir.
Glou. With all my heart.
Edg. Why I do trifle thus with his despair
Is done to cure it.
Glou. [*Kneeling*] O you mighty gods!
This world I do renounce, and, in your sights,
Shake patiently my great affliction off:
If I could bear it longer, and not fall
To quarrel with your great opposeless wills,
My snuff and loathed part of nature should
Burn itself out. If Edgar live, O, bless him!

Now, fellow, fare thee well. [*He falls forward.*
Edg. Gone, sir: farewell.
And yet I know not how conceit may rob
The treasury of life, when life itself
Yields to the theft: had he been where he thought,
By this, had thought been past. Alive or dead?
Ho, you sir! friend! Hear you, sir! speak!
Thus might he pass indeed: yet he revives.
What are you, sir?
Glou. Away, and let me die.
Edg. Hadst thou been aught but gossamer, feathers, air,
So many fathom down precipitating,
Thou'dst shiver'd like an egg: but thou dost breathe;
Hast heavy substance; bleed'st not; speak'st; art sound.
Ten masts at each make not the altitude
Which thou hast perpendicularly fell:
Thy life's a miracle. Speak yet again.
Glou. But have I fall'n, or no?
Edg. From the dread summit of this chalky bourn.
Look up a-height; the shrill-gorged lark so far
Cannot be seen or heard: do but look up.
Glou. Alack, I have no eyes.
Is wretchedness deprived that benefit,
To end itself by death? 'Twas yet some comfort,
When misery could beguile the tyrant's rage,
And frustrate his proud will.
Edg. Give me your arm:
Up: so. How is't? Feel you your legs? You stand.
Glou. Too well, too well.
Edg. This is above all strangeness.
Upon the crown o' the cliff, what thing was that
Which parted from you?
Glou. A poor unfortunate beggar.
Edg. As I stood here below, methought his eyes
Were two full moons; he had a thousand noses,
Horns whelk'd and waved like the enridged sea:

It was some fiend; therefore, thou happy father,
Think that the clearest gods, who make them honours
Of men's impossibilities, have preserved thee.

Glou. I do remember now: henceforth I'll bear
Affliction till it do cry out itself
'Enough, enough,' and die. That thing you speak of,
I took it for a man; often 'twould say
'The fiend, the fiend:' he led me to that place.

Edg. Bear free and patient thoughts. But who comes here?

Enter LEAR, *fantastically dressed with wild flowers.*

The safer sense will ne'er accommodate 81
His master thus.

Lear. No, they cannot touch me for coining; I am the king himself.

Edg. O thou side-piercing sight!

Lear. Nature's above art in that respect. There's your press-money. That fellow handles his bow like a crow-keeper: draw me a clothier's yard. Look, look, a mouse! Peace, peace; this piece of toasted cheese will do't. There's my gauntlet; I'll prove it on a giant Bring up the brown bills. O, well flown, bird! i' the clout, i' the clout: hewgh! Give the word. 92

Edg. Sweet marjoram.

Lear. Pass.

Glou. I know that voice.

Lear. Ha! Goneril, with a white beard! They flattered me like a dog; and told me I had white hairs in my beard ere the black ones were there. To say 'ay' and 'no' to every thing that I said!—'Ay' and 'no' too was no good divinity. When the rain came to wet me once, and the wind to make me chatter; when the thunder would not peace at my bidding; there I found 'em, there I smelt 'em out. Go to, they are not men o' their words: they told me I was every thing; 'tis a lie, I am not ague-proof.

Glou. The trick of that voice I do well remember:
Is't not the king?
Lear. Ay, every inch a king:
When I do stare, see how the subject quakes.
I pardon that man's life. What was thy cause?
Adultery?
Thou shalt not die: die for adultery! No.
Glou. O, let me kiss that hand!
Lear. Let me wipe it first; it smells of mortality.
Glou. O ruin'd piece of nature! This great world
Shall so wear out to nought. Dost thou know me?
Lear. I remember thine eyes well enough. Dost thou squiny at me? No, do thy worst, blind Cupid; I'll not love. Read thou this challenge; mark but the penning of it.
Glou. Were all the letters suns, I could not see one.
Edg. I would not take this from report; it is,
And my heart breaks at it.
Lear. Read.
Glou. What, with the case of eyes?
Lear. O, ho, are you there with me? No eyes in your head, nor no money in your purse? Your eyes are in a heavy case, your purse in a light: yet you see how this world goes.
Glou. I see it feelingly.
Lear. What, art mad? A man may see how this world goes with no eyes. Look with thine ears: see how yond justice rails upon yond simple thief. Hark, in thine ear: change places; and, handy-dandy, which is the justice, which is the thief? Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?
Glou. Ay, sir.
Lear. And the creature run from the cur? There thou mightst behold the great image of authority: a dog's obeyed in office.
The usurer hangs the cozener.
Through tatter'd clothes small vices do appear;
Robes and furr'd gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold,

And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks ;
Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw does pierce it.
None does offend, none, I say, none ; I'll able 'em :
Take that of me, my friend, who have the power
To seal the accuser's lips. Get thee glass eyes ;
And, like a scurvy politician, seem
To see the things thou dost not. Now, now, now, now :
Pull off my boots : harder, harder : so.
Edg. O, matter and impertinency mix'd !
Reason in madness !
Lear. If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes.
I know thee well enough ; thy name is Gloucester :
Thou must be patient ; we came crying hither :
Thou know'st, the first time that we smell the air,
We wawl and cry. I will preach to thee : mark.
Glou. Alack, alack the day !
Lear. When we are born, we cry that we are come
To this great stage of fools : this' a good block ;
It were a delicate stratagem, to shoe
A troop of horse with felt : I'll put 't in proof ;
And when I have stol'n upon these sons-in-law,
Then, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill !

Enter a Gentleman, *with* Attendants.

Gent. O, here he is : lay hand upon him. Sir,
Your most dear daughter—
Lear. No rescue ? What, a prisoner ? I am even
The natural fool of fortune. Use me well ;
You shall have ransom. Let me have surgeons ;
I am cut to the brains.
Gent. You shall have any thing.
Lear. No seconds ? all myself ?
Why, this would make a man a man of salt,
To use his eyes for garden water-pots,
Ay, and laying autumn's dust.
Gent. Good sir,—

Lear. I will die bravely, like a bridegroom. What!
I will be jovial: come, come; I am a king,
My masters, know you that.
Gent. You are a royal one, and we obey you.
Lear. Then there's life in't. Nay, if you get it, you shall get it with running. Sa, sa, sa, sa.
[*Exit running; Attendants follow.*
Gent. A sight most pitiful in the meanest wretch,
Past speaking of in a king! Thou hast one daughter,
Who redeems nature from the general curse
Which twain have brought her to.
Edg. Hail, gentle sir.
Gent. Sir, speed you: what's your will?
Edg. Do you hear aught, sir, of a battle toward?
Gent. Most sure and vulgar: every one hears that,
Which can distinguish sound.
Edg. But, by your favour,
How near's the other army?
Gent. Near and on speedy foot; the main descry
Stands on the hourly thought.
Edg. I thank you, sir: that's all.
Gent. Though that the queen on special cause is here,
Her army is moved on.
Edg. I thank you, sir. [*Exit Gent.*
Glou. You ever-gentle gods, take my breath from me;
Let not my worser spirit tempt me again
To die before you please!
Edg. Well pray you, father.
Glou. Now, good sir, what are you?
Edg. A most poor man, made tame to fortune's blows;
Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows,
Am pregnant to good pity. Give me your hand,
I'll lead you to some biding.
Glou. Hearty thanks:
The bounty and the benison of heaven
To boot, and boot!

Enter OSWALD.

Osw. A proclaim'd prize! Most happy!
That eyeless head of thine was first framed flesh
To raise my fortunes. Thou old unhappy traitor,
Briefly thyself remember: the sword is out
That must destroy thee.

Glou. Now let thy friendly hand
Put strength enough to 't. [*Edgar interposes.*

Osw. Wherefore, bold peasant,
Darest thou support a publish'd traitor? Hence;
Lest that the infection of his fortune take
Like hold on thee. Let go his arm.

Edg. Chill not let go, zir, without vurther 'casion.

Osw. Let go, slave, or thou diest!

Edg. Good gentleman, go your gait, and let poor volk pass. An chud ha' bin zwaggered out of my life, 'twould not ha' bin zo long as 'tis by a vortnight. Nay, come not near th' old man; keep out, che vor ye, or ise try whether your costard or my ballow be the harder: chill be plain with you.

Osw. Out, dunghill!

Edg. Chill pick your teeth, zir: come; no matter vor your foins. [*They fight, and Edgar knocks him down.*

Osw. Slave, thou hast slain me: villain, take my purse:
If ever thou wilt thrive, bury my body;
And give the letters which thou find'st about me
To Edmund earl of Gloucester; seek him out
Upon the British party: O, untimely death! [*Dies.*

Edg. I know thee well: a serviceable villain;
As duteous to the vices of thy mistress
As badness would desire.

Glou. What, is he dead?

Edg. Sit you down, father; rest you.
Let 's see these pockets: the letters that he speaks of
May be my friends. He 's dead; I am only sorry
He had no other death's-man. Let us see:
Leave, gentle wax; and, manners, blame us not:

To know our enemies' minds, we 'ld rip their hearts;
Their papers, is more lawful.

[*Reads*] 'Let our reciprocal vows be remembered. You have many opportunities to cut him off: if your will want not, time and place will be fruitfully offered. There is nothing done, if he return the conqueror: then am I the prisoner, and his bed my gaol; from the loathed warmth whereof deliver me, and supply the place for your labour.

'Your—wife, so I would say— 241
'Affectionate servant,
'GONERIL.'

O undistinguish'd space of woman's will!
A plot upon her virtuous husband's life;
And the exchange my brother! Here, in the sands,
Thee I 'll rake up, the post unsanctified
Of murderous lechers: and in the mature time
With this ungracious paper strike the sight
Of the death-practised duke: for him 'tis well 250
That of thy death and business I can tell.

Glou. The king is mad: how stiff is my vile sense,
That I stand up, and have ingenious feeling
Of my huge sorrows! Better I were distract:
So should my thoughts be sever'd from my griefs,
And woes by wrong imaginations lose
The knowledge of themselves.

Edg. Give me your hand: [*Drum afar off.*
Far off, methinks, I hear the beaten drum:
Come, father, I 'll bestow you with a friend. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII. *A tent in the French camp.* LEAR *on a bed asleep, soft music playing;* Gentleman, *and others attending.*

Enter CORDELIA, KENT, *and* Doctor.

Cor. O thou good Kent, how shall I live and work,
To match thy goodness? My life will be too short,
And every measure fail me.

Kent. To be acknowledged, madam, is o'erpaid.
All my reports go with the modest truth;
Nor more nor clipp'd, but so.
Cor. Be better suited:
These weeds are memories of those worser hours:
I prithee, put them off.
Kent. Pardon me, dear madam;
Yet to be known shortens my made intent:
My boon I make it, that you know me not
Till time and I think meet.
Cor. Then be 't so, my good lord. [*To the Doctor*] How does the king?
Doct. Madam, sleeps still.
Cor. O you kind gods,
Cure this great breach in his abused nature!
The untuned and jarring senses, O, wind up
Of this child-changed father!
Doct. So please your majesty
That we may wake the king: he hath slept long.
Cor. Be govern'd by your knowledge, and proceed
I' the sway of your own will. Is he array'd?
Gent. Ay, madam; in the heaviness of his sleep
We put fresh garments on him.
Doct. Be by, good madam, when we do awake him;
I doubt not of his temperance.
Cor. Very well.
Doct. Please you, draw near. Louder the music there!
Cor. O my dear father! Restoration hang
Thy medicine on my lips; and let this kiss
Repair those violent harms that my two sisters
Have in thy reverence made!
Kent. Kind and dear princess!
Cor. Had you not been their father, these white flakes
Had challenged pity of them. Was this a face
To be opposed against the warring winds?
To stand against the deep dread-bolted thunder?

In the most terrible and nimble stroke
Of quick, cross lightning? to watch—poor perdu!—
With this thin helm? Mine enemy's dog,
Though he had bit me, should have stood that night
Against my fire; and wast thou fain, poor father,
To hovel thee with swine, and rogues forlorn,
In short and musty straw? Alack, alack!
'Tis wonder that thy life and wits at once
Had not concluded all. He wakes; speak to him.
Doct. Madam, do you; 'tis fittest.
Cor. How does my royal lord? How fares your majesty?
Lear. You do me wrong to take me out o' the grave:
Thou art a soul in bliss; but I am bound
Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears
Do scald like molten lead.
Cor. Sir, do you know me?
Lear. You are a spirit, I know: when did you die?
Cor. Still, still, far wide!
Doct. He's scarce awake: let him alone awhile.
Lear. Where have I been? Where am I? Fair daylight?
I am mightily abused. I should e'en die with pity,
To see another thus. I know not what to say.
I will not swear these are my hands: let's see;
I feel this pin prick. Would I were assured
Of my condition!
Cor. O, look upon me, sir,
And hold your hands in benediction o'er me:
No, sir, you must not kneel.
Lear. Pray, do not mock me:
I am a very foolish, fond, old man,
Fourscore and upward, not an hour more nor less;
And, to deal plainly,
I fear I am not in my perfect mind.
Methinks I should know you, and know this man;
Yet I am doubtful: for I am mainly ignorant
What place this is; and all the skill I have

Remembers not these garments; nor I know not
Where I did lodge last night. Do not laugh at me;
For, as I am a man, I think this lady
To be my child Cordelia.
Cor. And so I am, I am.
Lear. Be your tears wet? yes, 'faith. I pray, weep not:
If you have poison for me, I will drink it.
I know you do not love me; for your sisters
Have, as I do remember, done me wrong:
You have some cause, they have not.
Cor. No cause, no cause.
Lear. Am I in France?
Kent. In your own kingdom, sir.
Lear. Do not abuse me.
Doct. Be comforted, good madam: the great rage,
You see, is kill'd in him: and yet it is danger
To make him even o'er the time he has lost.
Desire him to go in; trouble him no more
Till further settling.
Cor. Will 't please your highness walk?
Lear. You must bear with me:
Pray you now, forget and forgive: I am old and foolish.
[*Exeunt all but Kent and Gentleman.*
Gent. Holds it true, sir, that the Duke of Cornwall was so slain?
Kent. Most certain, sir.
Gent. Who is conductor of his people?
Kent. As 'tis said, the bastard son of Gloucester.
Gent. They say Edgar, his banished son, is with the Earl of Kent in Germany.
Kent. Report is changeable. 'Tis time to look about; the powers of the kingdom approach apace.
Gent. The arbitrement is like to be bloody. Fare you well, sir. [*Exit.*
Kent. My point and period will be thoroughly wrought,
Or well or ill, as this day's battle's fought. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. *The British camp, near Dover.*

Enter, with drum and colours, EDMUND, REGAN, Gentlemen, *and* Soldiers.

Edm. Know of the duke if his last purpose hold,
Or whether since he is advised by aught
To change the course: he 's full of alteration
And self-reproving: bring his constant pleasure.
[*To a Gentleman, who goes out.*
Reg. Our sister's man is certainly miscarried.
Edm. 'Tis to be doubted, madam.
Reg. Now, sweet lord,
You know the goodness I intend upon you:
Tell me—but truly—but then speak the truth,
Do you not love my sister?
Edm. In honour'd love.
Reg. I never shall endure her: dear my lord,
Be not familiar with her.
Edm. Fear me not:
She and the duke her husband!

Enter, with drum and colours, ALBANY, GONERIL, *and* Soldiers.

Gon. [*Aside*] I had rather lose the battle than that sister
Should loosen him and me.
Alb. Our very loving sister, well be-met.
Sir, this I hear; the king is come to his daughter,
With others whom the rigour of our state
Forced to cry out. Where I could not be honest,
I never yet was valiant: for this business,
It toucheth us, as France invades our land,
Not bolds the king, with others, whom, I fear,
Most just and heavy causes make oppose.

Edm. Sir, you speak nobly.
Reg. Why is this reason'd?
Gon. Combine together 'gainst the enemy;
For these domestic and particular broils
Are not the question here.
Alb. Let's then determine
With the ancient of war on our proceedings.
Edm. I shall attend you presently at your tent.
Reg. Sister, you'll go with us?
Gon. No.
Reg. 'Tis most convenient; pray you, go with us.
Gon. [*Aside*] O, ho, I know the riddle.—I will go.

As they are going out, enter EDGAR *disguised.*

Edg. If e'er your grace had speech with man so poor,
Hear me one word.
Alb. I'll overtake you. Speak.
[*Exeunt all but Albany and Edgar.*
Edg. Before you fight the battle, ope this letter.
If you have victory, let the trumpet sound
For him that brought it: wretched though I seem,
I can produce a champion that will prove
What is avouched there. If you miscarry,
Your business of the world hath so an end,
And machination ceases. Fortune love you!
Alb. Stay till I have read the letter.
Edg. I was forbid it.
When time shall serve, let but the herald cry,
And I'll appear again.
Alb. Why, fare thee well: I will o'erlook thy paper.
[*Exit Edgar.*

Re-enter EDMUND.

Edm. The enemy's in view; draw up your powers.
Here is the guess of their true strength and forces

By diligent discovery ; but your haste
Is now urged on you.
Alb. We will greet the time. [*Exit.*
Edm. To both these sisters have I sworn my love ;
Each jealous of the other, as the stung
Are of the adder. Which of them shall I take ?
Both ? one ? or neither ? Neither can be enjoy'd,
If both remain alive : to take the widow
Exasperates, makes mad her sister Goneril ;
And hardly shall I carry out my side,
Her husband being alive. Now then we 'll use
His countenance for the battle ; which being done,
Let her who would be rid of him devise
His speedy taking off. As for the mercy
Which he intends to Lear and to Cordelia,
The battle done, and they within our power,
Shall never see his pardon ; for my state
Stands on me to defend, not to debate. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *A field between the two camps.*

Alarum within. Enter, with drum and colours, LEAR, CORDELIA, *and* Soldiers, *over the stage ; and exeunt.*

Enter EDGAR *and* GLOUCESTER.

Edg. Here, father, take the shadow of this tree
For your good host ; pray that the right may thrive :
If ever I return to you again,
I 'll bring you comfort.
Glou. Grace go with you, sir ! [*Exit Edgar.*

Alarum and retreat within. Re-enter EDGAR.

Edg. Away, old man ; give me thy hand ; away !
King Lear hath lost, he and his daughter ta'en :
Give me thy hand ; come on.
Glou. No farther, sir ; a man may rot even here.

Edg. What, in ill thoughts again? Men must endure
Their going hence, even as their coming hither:
Ripeness is all: come on.
Glou. And that's true too. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The British camp near Dover.*

Enter, in conquest, with drum and colours, EDMUND; LEAR *and* CORDELIA, *prisoners;* Captain, Soldiers, *&c.*

Edm. Some officers take them away: good guard,
Until their greater pleasures first be known
That are to censure them.
Cor. We are not the first
Who, with best meaning, have incurr'd the worst.
For thee, oppressed king, am I cast down;
Myself could else out-frown false fortune's frown.
Shall we not see these daughters and these sisters?
Lear. No, no, no, no! Come, let's away to prison:
We two alone will sing like birds i' the cage:
When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down,
And ask of thee forgiveness: so we'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
Talk of court news; and we'll talk with them too,
Who loses and who wins; who's in, who's out;
And take upon's the mystery of things,
As if we were God's spies: and we'll wear out,
In a wall'd prison, packs and sects of great ones,
That ebb and flow by the moon.
Edm. Take them away.
Lear. Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia,
The gods themselves throw incense. Have I caught thee?
He that parts us shall bring a brand from heaven,
And fire us hence like foxes. Wipe thine eyes;
Come. [*Exeunt Lear and Cordelia, guarded.*

Edm. Come hither, captain; hark.
Take thou this note [*giving a paper*]; go follow them to prison:
One step I have advanced thee; if thou dost
As this instructs thee, thou dost make thy way
To noble fortunes: know thou this, that men
Are as the time is: to be tender-minded
Does not become a sword: thy great employment
Will not bear question; either say thou 'lt do 't,
Or thrive by other means.
Capt. I 'll do 't, my lord.
Edm. About it; and write happy when thou hast done.
Mark, I say, instantly; and carry it so
As I have set it down.
Capt. I cannot draw a cart, nor eat dried oats;
If it be man's work, I 'll do 't. [*Exit.*

Flourish. *Enter* ALBANY, GONERIL, REGAN, *another* Captain, *and* Soldiers.

Alb. Sir, you have shown to-day your valiant strain,
And fortune led you well: you have the captives
That were the opposites of this day's strife:
We do require them of you, so to use them
As we shall find their merits and our safety
May equally determine.
Edm. Sir, I thought it fit
To send the old and miserable king
To some retention and appointed guard;
Whose age has charms in it, whose title more,
To pluck the common bosom on his side,
And turn our impress'd lances in our eyes
Which do command them. With him I sent the queen;
My reason all the same; and they are ready
To-morrow, or at further space, to appear
Where you shall hold your session. At this time
We sweat and bleed: the friend hath lost his friend;

And the best quarrels, in the heat, are cursed
By those that feel their sharpness:
The question of Cordelia and her father
Requires a fitter place.
Alb. Sir, by your patience,
I hold you but a subject of this war,
Not as a brother.
Reg. That 's as we list to grace him.
Methinks our pleasure might have been demanded,
Ere you had spoke so far. He led our powers;
Bore the commission of my place and person;
The which immediacy may well stand up,
And call itself your brother.
Gon. Not so hot:
In his own grace he doth exalt himself,
More than in your addition.
Reg. In my rights
By me invested, he compeers the best.
Gon. That were the most if he should husband you.
Reg. Jesters do oft prove prophets.
Gon. Holla, holla!
That eye that told you so look'd but a-squint.
Reg. Lady, I am not well; else I should answer
From a full-flowing stomach. General,
Take thou my soldiers, prisoners, patrimony;
Dispose of them, of me; the walls are thine:
Witness the world, that I create thee here
My lord and master.
Gon. Mean you to enjoy him?
Alb. The let-alone lies not in your good will.
Edm. Nor in thine, lord.
Alb. Half-blooded fellow, yes.
Reg. [*To Edmund*] Let the drum strike, and prove my title thine.
Alb. Stay yet; hear reason. Edmund, I arrest thee
On capital treason; and, in thine arrest,

This gilded serpent [*pointing to Gon.*]. For your claim, fair sister,
I bar it in the interest of my wife;
'Tis she is sub-contracted to this lord,
And I, her husband, contradict your bans.
If you will marry, make your loves to me,
My lady is bespoke.

Gon. An interlude!

Alb. Thou art arm'd, Gloucester: let the trumpet sound:
If none appear to prove upon thy head
Thy heinous, manifest, and many treasons,
There is my pledge [*throwing down a glove*]; I'll prove it on thy heart,
Ere I taste bread, thou art in nothing less
Than I have here proclaim'd thee.

Reg. Sick, O, sick!

Gon. [*Aside*] If not, I'll ne'er trust medicine.

Edm. There's my exchange [*throwing down a glove*]: what in the world he is
That names me traitor, villain-like he lies:
Call by thy trumpet: he that dares approach,
On him, on you, who not? I will maintain
My truth and honour firmly.

Alb. A herald, ho!

Edm. A herald, ho, a herald!

Alb. Trust to thy single virtue; for thy soldiers,
All levied in my name, have in my name
Took their discharge.

Reg. My sickness grows upon me.

Alb. She is not well; convey her to my tent.

[*Exit Regan, led.*

Enter a Herald.

Come hither, herald,—Let the trumpet sound,—
And read out this.

Capt. Sound, trumpet! [*A trumpet sounds.*

Her. [*Reads*] 'If any man of quality or degree within the lists of the army will maintain upon Edmund, supposed Earl of Gloucester, that he is a manifold traitor, let him appear by the third sound of the trumpet: he is bold in his defence.'

Edm. Sound! [*First trumpet.*

Her. Again! [*Second trumpet.*

Her. Again! [*Third trumpet.*

[*Trumpet answers within.*

Enter EDGAR, *at the third sound, armed, with a trumpet before him.*

Alb. Ask him his purposes, why he appears
Upon this call o' the trumpet.

Her. What are you?
Your name, your quality? and why you answer
This present summons?

Edg. Know, my name is lost;
By treason's tooth bare-gnawn and canker-bit:
Yet am I noble as the adversary
I come to cope.

Alb. Which is that adversary?

Edg. What's he that speaks for Edmund Earl of Gloucester?

Edm. Himself: what say'st thou to him?

Edg. Draw thy sword,
That, if my speech offend a noble heart,
Thy arm may do thee justice: here is mine.
Behold, it is the privilege of mine honours,
My oath, and my profession: I protest,
Maugre thy strength, youth, place, and eminence,
Despite thy victor sword and fire-new fortune,
Thy valour and thy heart, thou art a traitor;
False to thy gods, thy brother, and thy father;
Conspirant 'gainst this high-illustrious prince;
And, from the extremest upward of thy head
To the descent and dust below thy foot,

A most toad-spotted traitor. Say thou 'No,'
This sword, this arm, and my best spirits, are bent
To prove upon thy heart, whereto I speak,
Thou liest.
Edm. In wisdom I should ask thy name;
But, since thy outside looks so fair and warlike,
And that thy tongue some say of breeding breathes,
What safe and nicely I might well delay
By rule of knighthood, I disdain and spurn:
Back do I toss these treasons to thy head;
With the hell-hated lie o'erwhelm thy heart;
Which, for they yet glance by and scarcely bruise,
This sword of mine shall give them instant way,
Where they shall rest for ever. Trumpets, speak!
[*Alarums. They fight. Edmund falls.*
Alb. Save him, save him!
Gon. This is practice, Gloucester:
By the law of arms thou wast not bound to answer
An unknown opposite; thou art not vanquish'd,
But cozen'd and beguiled.
Alb. Shut your mouth, dame,
Or with this paper shall I stop it: Hold, sir;
Thou worse than any name, read thine own evil:
No tearing, lady; I perceive you know it.
[*Gives the letter to Edmund.*
Gon. Say, if I do, the laws are mine, not thine:
Who can arraign me for 't?
Alb. Most monstrous! oh!
Know'st thou this paper?
Gon. Ask me not what I know. [*Exit.*
Alb. Go after her: she 's desperate; govern her.
Edm. What you have charged me with, that have I done;
And more, much more; the time will bring it out:
'Tis past, and so am I. But what art thou
That hast this fortune on me? If thou 'rt noble,
I do forgive thee.

Edg. Let 's exchange charity.
I am no less in blood than thou art, Edmund;
If more, the more thou hast wrong'd me.
My name is Edgar, and thy father's son.
The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to plague us:
The dark and vicious place where thee he got
Cost him his eyes.
Edm. Thou hast spoken right, 'tis true;
The wheel is come full circle; I am here.
Alb. Methought thy very gait did prophesy
A royal nobleness: I must embrace thee:
Let sorrow split my heart, if ever I
Did hate thee or thy father!
Edg. Worthy prince, I know 't.
Alb. Where have you hid yourself?
How have you known the miseries of your father?
Edg. By nursing them, my lord. List a brief tale;
And when 'tis told, O, that my heart would burst!
The bloody proclamation to escape,
That follow'd me so near,—O, our lives' sweetness!
That we the pain of death would hourly die
Rather than die at once!—taught me to shift
Into a madman's rags; to assume a semblance
That very dogs disdain'd: and in this habit
Met I my father with his bleeding rings,
Their precious stones new lost: became his guide,
Led him, begg'd for him, saved him from despair;
Never,—O fault!—reveal'd myself unto him,
Until some half-hour past, when I was arm'd:
Not sure, though hoping, of this good success,
I ask'd his blessing, and from first to last
Told him my pilgrimage: but his flaw'd heart,
Alack, too weak the conflict to support!
'Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief,
Burst smilingly.

Edm. This speech of yours hath moved me,
And shall perchance do good: but speak you on;
You look as you had something more to say.
Alb. If there be more, more woeful, hold it in;
For I am almost ready to dissolve,
Hearing of this.
Edg. This would have seem'd a period
To such as love not sorrow; but another,
To amplify too much, would make much more,
And top extremity.
Whilst I was big in clamour came there in a man,
Who, having seen me in my worst estate,
Shunn'd my abhorr'd society; but then, finding
Who 'twas that so endured, with his strong arms
He fasten'd on my neck, and bellow'd out
As he 'ld burst heaven; threw him on my father;
Told the most piteous tale of Lear and him
That ever ear received: which in recounting
His grief grew puissant, and the strings of life
Began to crack: twice then the trumpets sounded,
And there I left him tranced.
Alb. But who was this?
Edg. Kent, sir, the banish'd Kent; who in disguise
Follow'd his enemy king, and did him service
Improper for a slave.

Enter a Gentleman, *with a bloody knife.*

Gent. Help, help, O, help!
Edg. What kind of help?
Alb. Speak, man.
Edg. What means that bloody knife?
Gent. 'Tis hot, it smokes;
It came even from the heart of—O, she 's dead!
Alb. Who dead? speak, man.
Gent. Your lady, sir, your lady: and her sister
By her is poisoned; she hath confess'd it.

Edm. I was contracted to them both: all three
Now marry in an instant.
Edg. Here comes Kent.
Alb. Produce their bodies, be they alive or dead:
This judgement of the heavens, that makes us tremble,
Touches us not with pity. [*Exit Gentleman.*

Enter KENT.

O, is this he? 230
The time will not allow the compliment
Which very manners urges.
Kent. I am come
To bid my king and master aye good night:
Is he not here?
Alb. Great thing of us forgot!
Speak, Edmund, where's the king? and where's Cordelia?
See'st thou this object, Kent?
[*The bodies of Goneril and Regan are brought in.*
Kent. Alack, why thus?
Edm. Yet Edmund was beloved:
The one the other poison'd for my sake,
And after slew herself.
Alb. Even so. Cover their faces. 240
Edm. I pant for life: some good I mean to do,
Despite of mine own nature. Quickly send,
Be brief in it, to the castle; for my writ
Is on the life of Lear and on Cordelia:
Nay, send in time.
Alb. Run, run, O, run!
Edg. To who, my lord? Who hath the office? send
Thy token of reprieve.
Edm. Well thought on: take my sword,
Give it the captain.
Alb. Haste thee, for thy life. [*Exit Edgar.* 250
Edm. He hath commission from thy wife and me
To hang Cordelia in the prison, and

To lay the blame upon her own despair,
That she fordid herself.

Alb. The gods defend her! Bear him hence awhile.

[*Edmund is borne off.*

Re-enter LEAR, *with* CORDELIA *dead in his arms;* EDGAR, Captain, *and others following.*

Lear. Howl, howl, howl, howl! O, you are men of stones:
Had I your tongues and eyes, I'ld use them so
That heaven's vault should crack. She's gone for ever!
I know when one is dead, and when one lives;
She's dead as earth. Lend me a looking-glass;
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
Why, then she lives.

Kent. Is this the promised end?

Edg. Or image of that horror?

Alb. Fall, and cease!

Lear. This feather stirs; she lives! if it be so,
It is a chance which does redeem all sorrows
That ever I have felt.

Kent. [*Kneeling*] O my good master!

Lear. Prithee, away.

Edg. 'Tis noble Kent, your friend.

Lear. A plague upon you, murderers, traitors all!
I might have saved her; now she's gone for ever!
Cordelia, Cordelia! stay a little. Ha!
What is't thou say'st? Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle, and low, an excellent thing in woman.
I kill'd the slave that was a-hanging thee.

Capt. 'Tis true, my lords, he did.

Lear. Did I not, fellow?
I have seen the day, with my good biting falchion
I would have made them skip: I am old now,
And these same crosses spoil me. Who are you?
Mine eyes are not o' the best: I'll tell you straight.

Kent. If fortune brag of two she loved and hated,

One of them we behold.
Lear. This is a dull sight. Are you not Kent?
Kent. The same,
Your servant Kent. Where is your servant Caius?
Lear. He 's a good fellow, I can tell you that;
He 'll strike, and quickly too: he 's dead and rotten.
Kent. No, my good lord; I am the very man,—
Lear. I 'll see that straight.
Kent. That, from your first of difference and decay,
Have follow'd your sad steps,—
Lear. You are welcome hither.
Kent. Nor no man else. All 's cheerless, dark, and deadly.
Your eldest daughters have fordone themselves,
And desperately are dead.
Lear. Ay, so I think.
Alb. He knows not what he says: and vain it is
That we present us to him.
Edg. Very bootless.

Enter a Captain.

Capt. Edmund is dead, my lord.
Alb. That 's but a trifle here.
You lords and noble friends, know our intent:
What comfort to this great decay may come
Shall be applied: for us, we will resign,
During the life of this old majesty,
To him our absolute power: [*To Edgar and Kent*] you, to your rights;
With boot, and such addition as your honours
Have more than merited. All friends shall taste
The wages of their virtue, and all foes
The cup of their deservings. O, see, see!
Lear. And my poor fool is hang'd! No, no, no life!
Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
And thou no breath at all? Thou 'lt come no more,
Never, never, never, never, never!

Pray you, undo this button: thank you, sir.
Do you see this? Look on her, look, her lips,
Look there, look there! [*Dies.*
Edg. He faints! My lord, my lord!
Kent. Break, heart; I prithee, break!
Edg. Look up, my lord.
Kent. Vex not his ghost: O, let him pass! he hates him much
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer.
Edg. He is gone, indeed.
Kent. The wonder is, he hath endured so long:
He but usurp'd his life.
Alb. Bear them from hence. Our present business
Is general woe. [*To Kent and Edgar*] Friends of my soul, you twain
Rule in this realm, and the gored state sustain.
Kent. I have a journey, sir, shortly to go;
My master calls me, I must not say no.
Alb. The weight of this sad time we must obey;
Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.
The oldest hath borne most: we that are young
Shall never see so much, nor live so long.
[*Exeunt, with a dead march.*

NOTES.

Act I. Scene I.

1. **had more affected**, had loved him better; and so was likely to have given him a larger share of the kingdom in the division of it he was now making. For **affected**, cp. *Cymb.* v. 5. 38, "*Affected* greatness got by you, not you."

2. **Albany**, "The third and last part of the island he (Brutus) allotted unto Albanecte hys youngest sonne ... This latter parcel at the first toke the name of Albanactus, who called it Albania" (Holinshed, *Chronicles*). This district included all the territory north of the Humber.

3, 4. **in the ... kingdom**, *i.e.* which he was about to make, he having determined "to shake all cares and business from our age" and "unburthen'd crawl toward death."

5, 6. **for equalities ... moiety**, for the portions assigned to each are so evenly balanced in extent and value, that both of them being most minutely examined, it is impossible to give to either's share a preference over the other. For **equalities**, the quartos give *qualities*, which some editors prefer. Schmidt goes so far as to say that **equalities** cannot be right, as "equality cannot be predicated of a part by itself, but only of the relationship of parts to each other; it is therefore essentially a singular idea." This is logically true, but it is dangerous to say of Elizabethan English that a word could not have been employed in a sense different from that more logical modern usage; and Steevens quotes from *The Flower of Friendship*, 1598, "After this match made, and *equalities* considered," etc., where the same objection would hold; **moiety**, Lat. *medietas*, half, is used by Shakespeare almost as often in the sense of portion generally as in that of *equal* portion, and such may be the meaning here. But Wright points out that it "is not clear that Gloucester knew anything of Lear's intention to include Cordelia in the distribution of the kingdom"; and the whole speech looks as if he had but two

persons in his mind; **curiosity**, careful scrutiny; cp. i. 4. 65, below.

8. **His breeding ... charge**, his bringing up has been at my expense.

8-10. **I have ... to it**, I have so often blushed to acknowledge him as my son, he being illegitimate, that now at last my sense of shame has become dulled; for **brazed**, cp. *Haml.* iii. 4. 37, "If damned custom have not *brass'd* it so That it is proof and bulwark against sense."

10. **by order of law**, legitimately begotten: **some year**, about a year; "some twelve or fourteen moonshines," as Edmund himself says, i. 2. 5, below. For **some**, used with a singular noun of time, see Abb. § 21.

11. **who is ... account**, who in spite of his legitimacy is no better beloved by me.

12. **something saucily**, somewhat impudently in not having been duly summoned; with the idea of a servant intruding into the presence of his superiors before his attendance was commanded. The word **knave**, used here with an affectionate sense, but meaning also a servant, accounts for the words **before he was sent for**. For **something**, used adverbially, see Abb. § 68.

18. **My ... lordship**, I am your humble servant to command; a courteous form of expression to a superior.

19. **I must ... better**, I am bound, for your father's sake, to love you, and to beg your better acquaintance.

20. **I shall ... deserving**, it shall be my endeavour to deserve the honour of being better known to you.

21. **out**, abroad; cp. *T. G.* i. 3. 7, "While other men ... Put forth their sons to seek preferment *out*." Wright points out that Edmund had been sent abroad owing to "there being no career for him at home in consequence of his illegitimate birth."

23. **Attend**, wait upon, be in attendance upon: **Burgundy**, Dyce on ii. *H. VI.* i. 1. 7, remarks that "Shakespeare, like other early dramatists, considered himself at liberty occasionally to disregard the laws of metre in the case of proper names," and quotes as an instance *R. II.* ii. 1. 284, "Sir John Norbery, Sir Robert Waterton and Francis Quoint."

24. **shall**, for *shall*, with a mixture of the meanings 'I am bound to' and 'I am sure to,' see Abb. § 315.

25. **our darker purpose**, our more secret intentions. "That **is**," says Johnson, "we have already made known in some measure our desire of parting the kingdom; we will now discover what has not been told before, the reasons by which we shall regulate the partition."

26. **the map there**, *i.e.* that is lying there: **in three**, into three portions.

27. **our fast intent**, our settled determination.

29. **Conferring ... strengths**, imposing them on those who are younger and therefore better able to bear them. To 'confer on' or 'upon' is generally used in regard to that which is an honour, privilege, as in *Temp.* i. 1. 126, "*confer* fair Milan With all the honours *on* my brother"; and perhaps this is the sense here, the **cares and business**, being of a kingly character. The quartos read *Confirming* for **Conferring**, and *yeares* for **strengths**.

30. **crawl toward death**, drag out our few remaining days.

32-4. **We have ... now**, we are now firmly determined without delaying the matter to make known what are the portions with which we dower each of our daughters, in order that we may in this way anticipate, and so render impossible, all future quarrelling on this point; **several**, separate, and so particular.

35. **Great rivals ... love**, competitors for the love of our youngest daughter, and at the same time men of lofty rank; *not* great, fierce, in their rivalry; **rivals**, literally "those who dwell on the banks of the same river. But, as all experience shows, there is no such fruitful source of contention as a water-right, and these would be often at strife with one another in regard of the periods during which they severally had a right to the use of the stream, turning it off into their own fields before the time, or leaving open the sluices beyond the time, or in other ways interfering, or being counted to interfere, with the rights of their neighbours. And in this way 'rivals' came to be applied to any who were on any grounds in unfriendly competition with one another" (Trench, *Study of Words*, pp. 315, 6).

36. **their amorous sojourn**, their stay in order to win her love.

37. **here ... answer'd**, are here and now to receive their answer.

38, 9. **Since now ... state**, since we are now determined to strip ourselves of the duties of rule, of property in the land of our kingdom, and of the cares which belong to power and majesty. For **both**, used of more than two things, cp. *W. T.* iv. 4. 56, "This day she was *both* pantler, butler, cook, Both dame and servant"; i. *H. IV.* v. 1. 107, "*Both* he and they and you."

40. **Which ... most?** which of you are we to regard as loving us most dearly?

42. **Where ... challenge**, so the folios; the quartos give "Where merit most doth challenge it." Steevens takes **with** to mean joined or superadded to; Crosby regards **with merit** as an adverbial phrase = deservedly, and explains "that I may extend my largest bounty where your natural affection *deservedly claims it as due.*" To *challenge* is frequently used by Shakespeare for

'claim as due,' and that sense will suit either interpretation; but taking the words as Crosby does, we lose the antithesis of **nature** and **merit** which seems to be intended here. If the folio reading is a correction by Shakespeare of the quartos, it seems probable that **challenge with** may mean 'where natural instinct and merit vie with each other in claiming,' etc.

44. **more ... matter**, my love towards you is something too weighty to be handled by feeble words, "a love," as she says below, "that makes breath poor and speech unable." Though in **wield** there is no inherent idea of weight (the radical sense being 'to govern'), yet we so generally use the word of managing what is heavy or, as a sceptre, important, that **matter** here seems to mean not merely 'subject,' but '*weighty* subject.' Furness considers the folio reading **word** more truly Shakespearean than the plural.

45. **Dearer ... liberty**, the three things precious to her beyond all else are the capacity of seeing, a wide prospect for the use of that capacity, and freedom of movement in that wide prospect. Cp. the horror of confinement expressed by Guiderius and Arviragus, *Cymb.* iii. 3. 27-44.

46. **Beyond ... rare**, beyond anything that can be prized either for its richness or for its rarity.

48. **As much ... found**, I love you with a love as great as ever was given by child or received by parent.

49. **unable**, incapable of that which is the object of the faculty, viz. adequate expression of thought.

50. **Beyond ... you**, "beyond all these comparisons by which Goneril sought to measure her love" (Wright); cp. *T. N.* v. 1. 139, "More by all mores, than e'er I shall love wife"; *M. A.* ii. 1. 318, "I were but little happy, if I could say how much."

51. **What ... do?** *i.e.* when her turn comes to be questioned; the folios give *speak* for **do**. Furness considers that apart from authority the choice of readings depends on "whether we take 'Love' and 'be silent' as infinitives or imperatives. If they are infinitives, we should read 'do' with the Qq, but if imperatives, we should follow the Ff."

52. **Of all these bounds**, of all the lands enclosed by these boundaries.

53. **with champains rich'd**, enriched with fertile plains about them; *champain* or *champaign*, open country, Lat. *campagna*; used by Shakespeare as an adjective also, *Lucr.* 1247, "like a goodly *champaign* plain."

54. **plenteous**, seems rather to mean fertilizing, bringing plenty. **wide-skirted**, having broad borders, *i.e.* extensive.

55. **lady**, mistress.

59. **the self-same metal**, the very same material, identical in disposition, character, *i.e.* fully as loving; **self**, = same, is frequent in Shakespeare; see Abb. § 20.

60. **And prize ... worth**, and estimate myself at the same value; the value or worth here consisting in her dutiful love for her father. On an occasion when her reward is to be proportioned to the love she shows, Regan would hardly boast of her worth in any other sense.

60, 1. **In my ... love**, examining my loyal heart, I find that she expresses with the utmost precision the very particulars of my love: **deed**, according to Delius, here used in legal phraseology: I follow the folios in placing a comma after **heart**.

62. **that I profess**, inasmuch as I, etc.

64. **Which the ... possesses**, perhaps means 'which are included in the full compass of the most dearly prized enjoyments of sense,' such as those just enumerated by Goneril, **square** being used of that which is complete in its comprehensiveness; **the most precious square of sense** has been variously explained as "the complement of all the senses" (Capell); "the entire domain of sensation" (Grant White); the finest susceptibility, or the highest capacity of happiness" (Hudson); "the most delicately sensitive part of my nature" (Wright); "the choicest estimate of sense" (Moberly); "the choicest symmetry of reason, the most normal and intelligent mode of thinking" (Schmidt who prefers the reading *professes* of the folios). As conjectures, Hanmer proposed *spirit* for **square**; Singer, *spacious sphere*; Collier, *precious sphere*; Grant White, *spacious square*.

65. **felicitate**, made happy; for the form of the word, see Abb. § 342.

68. **More richer**, the reading of the quartos; the folios give *more ponderous*, which it is difficult to understand as antithetical to **poor**, and still more difficult to account for if an error. For the double comparative, see Abb. § 11.

69. **hereditary ever**, corresponding with the words "Be this perpetual" in Goneril's case.

71. **validity**, worth, value; cp. *T. N.* i. 1. 12, "Of what *validity* and pitch so e'er"; now used only of efficacy, strength, as in *Haml.* iii. 2. 199, "Purpose is but the slave of memory, Of violent birth, but poor *validity*": **pleasure**, capacity of affording pleasure.

73. **our last and least**, the quartos give "*the* last *not* least," which with *our* for *the* many editors adopt as being a common, and almost proverbial, saying. Grant White remarks, "The impression produced by all the passages in which she [Cordelia] appears or is referred to is, that she was her father's little pet, while her sisters were big, bold, brazen beauties. Afterwards in

this very scene, Lear says of her to Burgundy: 'If aught within that *little* seeming substance or all of it, *with our displeasure piec'd*,' etc. When she is dead, too, her father, although an infirm old man, 'fourscore and upward,' carries her body in his arms. Cordelia was evidently the least, as well as the youngest and best beloved, of the old king's daughters; and therefore he says to her, 'Now our joy, what can you say to justify my intention of giving you the richest third of the kingdom, although you are the youngest born and the least royal in your presence'?..." Furness adds that if the phrase 'last *not* least' was a hackneyed one in Shakespeare's time, "it is all the more reason why it should not be used here. Its very opposition to the common use and wont makes it emphatic."

73-5. **to whose ... interess'd**, whose youthful affections the sovereigns of France and Burgundy are emulous to win. **vines and milk**, typical productions of the two countries, the latter referring to the pastures of Burgundy. For **interess'd**, = concerned, having a right, Jennens' emendation of the folio *interest* (which Schmidt maintains to be the contracted past participle *interested*), Steevens quotes passages from Drayton's *Polyolbion* and Ben Jonson's *Sejanus*, while Wright cites the dictionaries of Cotgrave, Florio, and Minsheu: for **draw**, cp. *Cymb.* iii. 3. 18, "to apprehend thus, *Draws* us a profit from all things we see."

81, 2. **Unhappy ... mouth**, it is my unhappiness, misfortune, that the deep-seated feelings of my heart refuse to be forced up into wordy expression: **majesty**, metrically a dissyllable; as in *A. W.* ii. 1. 98, "This is his *majesty*; say your mind to him."

83. **my bond**, the duty a child is bound to show to a parent.

86. **begot**, for the curtailed form of the participle, see Abb. § 343.

87. **as are right fit**, Abbott (§ 384) takes this as an instance of ellipsis, 'as (they) are most fit' (to be returned); others take as for *which*, while Moberly thinks that **are** is used by attraction to **duties**.

88. **most honour you**, honour you most highly, or above all men; not in contrast with the measure of her obedience and love.

89, 90. **Why have ... all?** if, as my sisters say, their love is entirely given to you, why have they husbands?

91. **must ... plight**, is destined to receive the pledge of my love.

95. **But goes ... this?** are these the real feelings of your heart, not merely words?

98. **dower**, endowment; all that you will carry with you when you wed.

99. **by the ... sun,** "the Druidical gods are, according to Cæsar, ... Apollo, Mars, Jove, and Minerva. Lear's two oaths, by Apollo and Jupiter, are therefore historically accurate; so is his swearing by Night, as 'Galli se omnes ab Dite patre prognatos prædicant,' and by Hecate, as a temple of Diana once occupied the place of the present St. Paul's in London (Palgrave's *Anglo-Saxons*, p. 51)" (Moberly).

100. **Hecate,** a dissyllable; as always in Shakespeare.

101. **operation,** influence; for this planetary influence, cp. below, i. 2. 96, 112, 3.

104. **Propinquity,** cp. *R. II.* i. 1. 119, "Such *neighbour nearness* to our sacred blood": **property of blood,** consanguinity; literally, 'ownness of blood.'

106. **from this,** from this time forward. **Scythian,** the barbarous character of the Scythians, and their cruelties, such as scalping the dead bodies of their enemies, have been proverbial since the days of Herodotus.

107. **generation,** offspring, those generated by him: **messes,** dishes of meat; O. F. *mes,* a dish.

108, 9. **shall to my ... neighbour'd,** shall find as warm a welcome to my heart.

110. **sometime,** former; for the word used, as here, adjectively, cp. *Haml.* i. 2. 8, "Therefore our *sometime* sister, now our queen."

112. **Come not ... wrath,** do not venture to interpose between me and the object of my wrath. Moberly points out that this is a natural trope for Lear to use as he would wear on his helmet the dragon crest of Britain.

113, 4. **and thought ... nursery,** had intended to trust my peace and comfort in my old age to her kind care; with an allusion to the game of primero, where to set, or set up, one's rest meant "to stand upon the cards you have in your hand, in hopes they may prove better than those of your adversary. Hence to make up your mind, to be determined" (Nares, *Gloss.*). But there is probably an allusion also to setting up a rest from which to fire a gun, as was common formerly.

115. **So be ... peace,** may I find peace in my grave as surely as I here, etc.

116. **who stirs?** what, does nobody stir to execute my command?

118. **digest this third,** share between you the portion that should have been Cordelia's; **digest,** though meaning 'enjoy,' has here something also of its literal sense, 'separate,' from Lat. *di-*, = *dis-*, apart, and *gerere,* to carry.

119. **plainness**, candour, outspoken honesty; cp. below, ii. 2. 90-2, "he cannot flatter, he, An honest mind and *plain*, he must **speak** truth! An they will take it, so; if not, he's *plain*": **marry her**, be her dower to get her a husband.

121, 2. **all the large ... majesty**, all the manifold accompaniments of majesty: the pomp and state which march in the train of royalty: **by monthly course**, alternately a month with each.

123. **With reservation**, reserving to myself as a body-guard.

124. **sustain'd**, maintained: **abode**, residence; **Make abode**, merely a periphrasis for *abide*, as in *T. G.* iv. 3. 23, "To Mantua, when I hear he *makes abode*."

126. **additions**, titles; Furness prefers the reading of the folios, *addition*, explaining it as 'external observance,' and comparing ii. 2. 18, below; *Macb.* i. 3. 106, "thane of Cawdor, In which *addition*, hail, most worthy thane!" iii. 1. 99; *Haml.* i. 4. 20, "with swinish phrase Soil our *addition*."

127. **of the rest**, of all else.

129. **coronet**, Delius and Schmidt think that the king does not here speak of his own crown, which he retains, but of a smaller ducal crown which he delivers to his sons-in-law; and Shakespeare no doubt elsewhere distinguishes between crowns and coronets. But, with Wright, I think no such distinction is meant here. To give a crown, which as dukes they already had, would hardly be symbolical of sharing between them the regal power which he now delivers into their hands.

133. **make from the shaft**, get out of the way of the discharge.

134. **the fork**, the forked head.

138. **When power ... bows?** when those who are powerful (here the king himself) bow down before, allow themselves to be swayed by, flatterers? **plainness**, plain speaking.

139. **Reverse thy doom**, this is the reading of the quartos, and seems to me more in keeping with the context, **answer ... hollowness** (the latter words corresponding so exactly to **when power to flattery bows**), than the reading of the folios *Reserve thy state.* Furness defends the latter reading as follows: "The folly to which majesty falls is not the casting off of a daughter,—that is no more foolish in a king than a subject,—but it is the surrendering of revenue, of sway, and of the crown itself,—this is hideous rashness, this is power bowing to flattery. Hence, Kent entreats Lear to 'reserve his state.' And to show more conclusively that Lear, not Cordelia, is chiefly in his thoughts, in his very next speech he says that the motive for which he now risks his life is the safety of the king. Furthermore, when Lear has been turned out of doors and his daughters have usurped all his powers, Gloucester (iii. 4. 148) says, 'Ah that good Kent! He said it would

be thus,' which cannot well refer to any other passage than the present. Moreover, had Kent been so devoted to Cordelia as to suffer banishment for her sake, would he not have followed her to France rather than followed as a servant his great patron whom he had thought on in his prayers? It need scarcely be added that 'reserve thy state' means 'retain thy royal dignity and power.'"

140. **in thy best consideration**, anxiously considering everything.

141. **answer ... judgement**, I am ready to stake my life upon the soundness of my judgement when I assure you, etc.

143, 4. **Nor are ... hollowness**, nor are those whose words make no great sound to be regarded on that account as empty-hearted, the very fact of their making no such sound showing that there is nothing hollow, insincere, in their ring; **Reverbs**, reverberate, probably Shakespeare's own coinage. Cp. *H. V.* iv. 4. 70-3, "I did never know so *full a voice* issue from so *empty a heart*: but the saying is true, 'The empty vessel makes the greater sound'"; and Lyly's *Euphues*, p. 45, Arber's ed., "The *emptie* vessel giueth a *greater sound* then the full barrell."

145. **a pawn**, a pledge, something to be pawned if necessary.

146. **To wage**, to wager, stake.

147. **safety**, well-being; his personal safety is not here in question; cp. *R. II.* i. 1. 32, "Tendering the precious *safety* of my prince," where no personal danger is referred to.

149. **The true ... eye**, that to which you still look for faithful service; the mark at which your thoughts aim; perhaps in allusion to the king's words in l. 133, above. The **blank**, or *white*, was the innermost circle of the target, the *gold* of the present day.

150. **Apollo**, see note on l. 99, above.

151. **Thou swear'st ... vain**, you vainly invoke your gods; for the omission of the preposition *by*, see Abb. § 200: **vassal**, literally *servant*, but here used as a term of abuse: **miscreant**, literally an *unbeliever*, here in the more general sense of *worthless fellow*.

155. **doom**, the folios read *gift*, which seems to show that "Reserve thy state," l. 139, was not merely "an accidental variation" of "Reverse thy doom," as Grant White thinks.

157. **recreant**, *i.e.* to his vows of allegiance; properly the present participle of F. *recroire*, to believe again, to change one's faith.

159. **Since**, the folios read *That*, which to Grant White seems more in keeping with the style of this play, the word of old having the meaning of *for that, seeing that, assuming that*.

160. **strain'd pride**, overweening pride, pride that has strained itself further than it can safely go.

161. **our power**, by which our sentence would be put into execution.

162. **place**, position as king.

163. **Our potency made good**, *i.e.* being made good; we, in assertion of the power that belongs to us, assign this punishment to you, this doom which is a fitting recompense for your disloyalty.

164. **allot**, allow, assign as a lot; perhaps with the intentional arrogance of one who looks upon himself as holding in his hands the destinies of his subjects, an earthly impersonation of Fate: **for provision**, for making provision.

165. **diseases**, inconveniences, vexations; as in i. *H. VI.* ii. 5. 44, "First, lean thine aged back against mine arm; And, in that ease, I 'll tell thee my *disease*."

168. **trunk**, body; but used contemptuously.

171. **Fare thee**, for *thee* used for *thou*, probably for euphonic reasons, see Abb. § 212: **sith**, from A.S. *sith than*, put for *sith thám*, after that, generally used illatively, as here; *since* in Shakespeare more commonly in a temporal sense: **wilt**, are determined to.

175. **And your ... approve**, and may your deeds justify your extravagant words; cp. *W. T.* iv. 4. 147, "Your praises are too *large*."

176. **effects**, results.

178. **old course**, former manner of life.

179. **Here 's**, for the inflection in *-s*, preceding a plural subject, see Abb. § 335.

181. **address towards you**, direct our speech, address ourselves, to you; **address**, ultimately from Lat. *directus*, straight.

182. **Hath ... daughter**, have been a competitor for; for instances of the relative followed by a singular verb, though the antecedent be plural, see Abb. § 247.

182-4. **what, in the ... love?** what is the smallest dower you will be satisfied with, and without which you will withdraw your suit? **in the least**, = at least, not elsewhere in Shakespeare.

186. **Nor will ... less**, nor are you likely to offer, hold out, less; **tender**, in this sense, from F. *tendre* (vb.), Lat. *tendere*, to stretch; in the sense of *hold dear*, from F. *tendre* (adj.), tender, Lat. *tener*.

187. **so**, it is doubtful whether this means *worthy of such a dowry*, or merely *dear*, *i.e.* when she behaved as a loved daughter should behave, we loved her; Malone and others take the word in the

former **sense**, Wright in the latter, which to me seems the more natural one.

188. **her price**, her value in our eyes.

189. **that little seeming substance**, perhaps means 'that form so small, and having so little in it that is really worth anything'; **little**, belonging in sense to both **seeming** and **substance**. Steevens takes **seeming** as specious; Wright explains, "that substance which is but little in appearance"; Moberly, "her nature that seems so slight and shallow"; Schmidt, noting that Shakespeare by **substance** commonly expresses *reality* in opposition to *shadow*, as "something which pretends to be that which it is not"; or, if **seeming** be a gerund, as "a creature whose reality is mere show or seeming."

190. **with ... pieced**, with nothing to piece out its imperfection except our displeasure, the only dower she will bring her husband.

191. **may fitly ... grace**, may reasonably find favour in your eyes; for **like**, cp. *T. C.* v. 2. 102, "that that *likes* not you pleases me best"; **grace**, the titular address of a duke.

192. **I know no answer**, I have no answer to make.

193. **infirmities**, defects, disqualifications: **owes**, owns.

194. **new-adopted ... hate**, newly received into our hatred; here as in **pieced**, l. 190, using a term which might be expected if the action spoken of was one of a favourable nature.

195. **stranger'd with**, made an alien by; for participles formed from adjectives and nouns, see Abb. § 294.

197. **Election ... conditions**, one does not make choice on such terms; *i.e.* acceptance is impossible when the alternative of taking or leaving is fettered by such conditions as you offer. The phrase **makes not up** is no doubt from making up one's mind; but the meaning seems rather to be "is left no choice but to decline," than "comes to no decision," as Malone and Wright explain. Schmidt takes **conditions** for *qualities*, a sense the word often has in Shakespeare; not as referring to the terms offered by the king.

200, l. **I would not ... hate**, I should be sorry to follow a course so opposite to the love with which you have treated me, to show so little reciprocation of your goodwill towards me, as to marry you to one whom I hate; for the omission of *as* before the infinitive, see Abb. § 281.

201-4. **therefore ... hers**, I therefore beg you to turn your love away from her in a direction more worthy than towards a wretch whom nature is almost ashamed, etc. The ellipsis of *I* before **beseech** is frequent in Shakespeare, as there can be no

doubt what the nominative is; for the double comp., see Abb. § 11.

205. **even but now**, only a moment ago: **your best object**, the dearest object of your sight.

206. **argument**, subject, theme; **balm**, solace.

207. **this trice of time**, this instant of time; **trice**, from "Span. *tris*, noise made by the breaking of glass; also, a trice, a short time, an instant; *venir en un tris*, to come in an instant; *estar en un tris*, to be on the verge of" ... (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*).

208, 9. **to dismantle ... favour**, as to strip her of the tokens of your love with which you have invested her.

211. **That monsters it**, as makes it monstrous; for *such* with *that* as its correlative, see Abb. § 279.

211, 2. **or your ... taint**, or, if she is not guilty of any such offence, the love for her which you once proclaimed so loudly must have become infected with some disease which has changed its healthy nature; the ellipsis of *must be* before **Fall'n** is not harsher than others in Shakespeare.

212-4. **which to ... me**, and to believe such a crime of her would necessarily require of me (who have had such proofs of her goodness) a faith which I should allow nothing less than a miracle, nothing vouched by mere reason, to implant in my breast; **majesty**, a dissyllable, as in l. 82, above.

215-7. **If for ... speak**, if my shortcoming consists, as I suppose it does, in lacking that readiness of speech in which words outrun intention of performance,—for where I have made up my mind to a thing my performance goes before speech of it,—I beg, etc. **If for I want** seems to be equivalent to 'If I err in wanting, if my mistake is that I want.' Jennens and Eccles suppose that it is a broken speech, expressing the modest fear and bashful diffidence of Cordelia, heightened by her concern under her pitiable circumstances.

218. **vicious blot**, stain of vice: **nor other**, I have not hesitated to adopt this emendation of Collier's MS. Corrector for *murder* or *murther* of the quartos and folios, such a crime being one which it is impossible for Cordelia to fancy herself suspected.

219. **dishonour'd step**, dishonourable proceeding.

221. **But even ... richer**, but even the want of that for the want of which I am all the richer; there is a confusion of constructions between 'I have been deprived *for* want,' etc., and '*the* want has deprived me'; and again **for which** is equivalent to 'for want of which'; for another instance of Shakespeare involving himself in a difficulty in the use of **want**, as he often does with *more* and *less*, see l. 270, below.

222. **still-soliciting**, ever, constantly, begging, cajoling.

224. **Hath lost ... liking**, has ruined me in your love. Wright takes **in** as denoting the amount of the loss, or as *in respect of*.

226-8. **a tardiness ... do?** nothing more than an innate reticence in declaring that love which will be shown, when need be, in action; a contrast to the "professed bosoms" of her sisters, l. 263, below; for **history**, in the sense of communication of what passes in the inner life of man, cp. *R. III.* iii. 5. 28, "I took him for the plainest harmless creature ... Made him my book, wherein my soul recorded The *history* of all her secret thoughts."

229-31. **Love's ... point**, that is not real love which is alloyed with considerations that have nothing to do with the main point, *i.e.* her true value as a woman, not the amount of dowry she brings to her husband.

232 **She is ... dowry**, her virtues are riches enough for any husband.

235. **Duchess**, *i.e. as* duchess.

237, 8. **so lost .. husband**, have by forfeiting the love of a father also forfeited the chance of me for a husband.

239. **Since that ... love**, since his love is made up of considerations of fortune. The folios read *respect and fortunes*, a hendiadys with the same meaning.

240. **I shall**, see Abb. § 318.

243. **I seize upon**, I eagerly appropriate.

244. **Be it ... away**, let it be lawful for me to take up that which has been rejected by others as worthless.

245, 6. **'tis strange ... respect**, it is strange that their icy neglect of her should cause my love to kindle into a flame of ardent appreciation.

247. **thrown to my chance**, contemptuously flung to me to take or leave as I like; with the idea, in **chance**, of good fortune, and perhaps, in **thrown**, of the throwing of dice.

249. **waterish**, used with the contemptuous sense which adjectives in *-ish* often have. Wright points out that Burgundy was the best watered district of France.

250. **unprized**, it is doubtful whether the meaning is 'unprized by others, but precious to me,' or 'invaluable,' 'priceless'; for the termination *-ed* used for *-able*, see Abb. § 375.

251. **though unkind**, though they are so unnatural, have none of that affection which kindred should have; cp. iii. 4. 69.

252. **here ... where**, used as substantives.

254. **nor shall ever see**, not mere futurity but 'are determined never again to see.'

256. **grace**, favour, good-will: **benison**, blessing from *benedic-*

tionem, accusative of Lat. *benedictio*, blessing, literally using words of good omen.

259. **Ye jewels ... father**, you who are so precious in the eyes of, etc. The folios give *The* **jewels**, which some editors prefer, making the words appositional to **you** in the next line: **wash'd**, tearful.

260. **I know ... are**, for the redundant object, see Abb. § 414.

263. **professed**, "Cordelia commits her father to the love which her sisters had professed, not to that which they really feel" (Delius).

264. **stood I ... grace**, if he looked upon me with such favour that he would listen to my words.

265. **I would ... place**, I would recommend him to some better shelter than he will find there; cp. *Cymb.* ii. 3. 51, "Who lets go by no vantages that may *Prefer* you to his daughter."

266. **So**, with these words.

267. **Prescribe not**, in the belief that the *to*, in the full phrase 'prescribe not *to* us,' is absorbed in the final **t** of **not**, Furness prints **not**, and refers to other instances of such absorption: **study**, anxious endeavour.

269. **At fortune's alms**, as something which fortune has given out of mere charity; cp. *Oth.* iii. 4. 122, "And shut myself up in some other course To *fortune's alms*," *i.e.* to receive whatever fortune may be pleased to send me out of charity; in both cases of something doled out in niggard fashion: **alms**, a singular noun, contracted from Lat. *eleëmosyna*, Gk. ἐλεημοσύνη, compassion, through A.S. *ælmæsse*: **scanted**, fallen short in.

270. **And well ... wanted**, and well deserve that want of love which you have shown to others; for the construction, Schmidt compares *C. E.* ii. 1. 97, "What *ruins* are in me that can be found By him not *ruin'd?*" *A. C.* iii. 6. 52, "our *love*, which, left unshown, Is often left *unloved*," *i.e.* unfelt.

271. **plaited**, complicated, intricate.

272. **Who cover ... derides**, those who endeavour to mask their faults under specious shows, are at last made ridiculous by shame. The folios and quartos give *covers*, and the folios *with shame*, which some editors retain, referring **Who** to **Time**, and making **faults** the object of both *covers* and **derides**.

275. **nearly appertains**, closely, vitally, concerns: **will hence**, will depart hence; the verb of motion omitted, as frequently with *forth, hence, hither*.

279. **age**, old age.

281. **with what poor judgement**, with what little discernment.

282. **grossly**, palpably, evidently; cp. *A. W.* i. 3. 184, "thine, eyes See it so *grossly* shown in thy behaviours."

284. **slenderly known himself**, imperfectly known his own mind and purposes.

285. **The best ... time**, even in the days when he was least given to freaks of caprice, when his mind was most healthy.

287. **engraffed**, the form *graft* as a verb is corrupt, being due to a confusion with *graffed*, originally the past participle of *graff*; but Shakespeare uses both forms. The verb comes from the subs. *graff*, a scion, so called "from the resemblance of the cut slip to the shape of a pointed pencil ... Gk. γραφίον, a style, pencil" ... (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*): **condition**, temperament.

288, 9. **infirm ... years**, made more choleric by infirmity.

290. **starts**, caprices, fits of passion; cp. i. *H. IV.* iii. 2. 125, "Base inclination and the *start* of spleen": **like**, likely.

292, 3. **There is ... him**, he and the king of France are still engaged in ceremonious farewells.

293. **hit together**, be of one mind.

293-5. **if our father ... us**, if our father continues to behave in the same capricious manner as at present, his surrender of the kingdom will cause us manifold annoyances, unless we agree upon a plan as to the way in which we are both to treat him; we must concert a plan for consistently treating his caprices as they arise.

297. **i' th' heat**, promptly; strike while the iron is hot.

SCENE II.

1. **goddess**, patroness of my fortunes; he being a natural, *i.e.* illegitimate, son.

1, 2. **to thy ... bound**, it is your dictates, not those of law and custom, to which my services are due.

2-4. **Wherefore ... me**, why should I stand a passive victim to the blows of rigid custom, and allow the prudish scruples of nations to disinherit me? **custom** refers to the ordinance of primogeniture, **curiosity** to the scruples which made a bastard incapable of inheriting property. For **deprive**, = disinherit, Wright cites Baret's *Aluearie*, *s.v.* to deprive, "To cast his sonne out of his house, to depriue or put him from the hope of succession, or inheritance, for some misdeede: to abastardize him."

5. **moonshines**, months.

6. **Lag**, behindhand (*sc.* in being born): **Why ... base**, why should I be branded with the terms bastard and base-born!

7. **When my ... compact**, when the parts of my body are as well put together; my proportions as well adjusted.

8. **generous**, lofty in its thoughts: **my shape as true**, my form as truly patterned after nature, *i.e.* as well-shaped. Cp. *Sonn.* lxii. 6, "Methinks no face so gracious is as mine, No *shape* so *true*."

9. **As honest madam's issue**, as the offspring of my lady who boasts of being an honest wife; **madam's**, used with a sarcastic emphasis.

12. **your land**, the land to which you are heir.

13. **is to**, is equally felt towards.

15. **speed**, prove successful in the object with which it is written.

16. **And ... thrive**, and my design prosper.

17. **top**, rise above; cp. below v. 3. 207, *Macb.* iv. 3. 57, "Not in the legions Of horrid hell can come a devil more damn'd In evils to *top* Macbeth."

18. **stand up for**, rise in defence of.

20. **subscribed his power**, signed away his kingly authority; not that there was a deed which he literally signed, but that he made a formal transfer of his authority.

21. **Confined to exhibition**! limited to a fixed allowance; cp. *Oth.* i. 3. 238, "I crave fit disposition for my wife, Due reference of place and *exhibition*"; a term still in use at the universities for an annual stipend generally smaller in amount than a 'scholarship.'

22. **Upon the gad**! goaded by sudden impulse; **gad**, goad, with which word it is cognate.

23. **So please**, elliptical for 'if it so please'; merely a courteous form of address.

24. **to put up**, to conceal; *sc.* in the pocket, as in *L. L. L.* iv. 1. 109.

28. **terrible**, indicating fear, frightened; for adjectives in *-ble* having both an active and a passive sense, see Abb. § 3.

33. **all o'erread**, wholly read over.

36. **either to detain**, alike by retaining; the indefinite infinitive.

37. **to blame**, deserving of blame, to be blamed; see Abb. § 359.

40. **as an ... virtue**, in order to make trial or experiment of my honour. Steevens points out that both **essay** and **taste** are terms taken from royal tables, where the food and drink were tasted by an officer appointed for that purpose in order to show that they were not poisoned; *essay* and *assay* are the same word,

from the Lat. *exagium*, a trial of weight, but the latter form is now chiefly confined to the testing of metals.

41. **This policy ... age**, probably, as Schmidt explains, a hendiadys for 'this policy of holding age in reverence.'

42. **to the best ... times**, to the best years of our lives, *i.e.* youth, when we are capable of full enjoyment.

43. **till our ... them**, till from our age we are unable to, etc.

43, 4. **I begin ... tyranny**, the tyrannical restraint exercised by old age (*i.e.* his old father) begins to strike me as something which it is weak and foolish to submit to.

45. **not as ... suffered**, not by virtue of any power it inherently possesses, but by virtue of its being submitted to; the abstract **tyranny** involves the concrete *tyrants*, hence **who** for *which*, though *who* frequently personifies irrational antecedents.

47. **would sleep**, were to sleep.

52. **a heart ... in**, a heart and a brain in which to conceive it.

55. **casement**, open window; properly the frame forming a window, or part of a window, which opened on hinges attached to the upright side of the frame in which it was fixed; cp. *M. N. D.* iii. 1. 57, "Why, then may you have a *casement* of the great chamber window, where we play, open."

56. **closet**, private room.

57. **character**, hand-writing, literally a mark stamped or engraved.

58. **matter**, purport, tenour: **durst**, I should dare to: subjunctive.

59. **in respect of that**, seeing that the matter is not good.

60. **were**, the subjunctive implying a greater uncertainty.

62. **hand**, hand-writing.

64, 5. **sounded ... business**, endeavoured to find out what your views were on the subject; a figure from taking soundings in water.

67. **sons ... age**, sons having come to maturity; for the implied participle, see Abb. § 381.

72. **apprehend**, seize and have brought before me.

76, 7. **you shall ... course**, you will be sure to be taking a direct course to your object; the folios give *should*, an irregular sequence difficult to explain except by a change of thought.

77. **where**, whereas; as frequently in Shakespeare.

78. **mistaking his purpose**, *i.e.* as you may find out afterwards that you have done, etc.

78-80. **it would ... obedience**, your acting in that way would

be a desperate wound to your own honour, and would utterly shatter all feelings of filial obedience in him: **pawn down**, lay down as a pledge.

81. **your honour**, here a title usual in addressing a lord.

82. **pretence**, design, intention; in the sense of *pretext* the word is less common in Shakespeare.

85, 6. **by an ... assurance**, by the proof of your own ears.

86. **have your satisfaction**, be convinced one way or the other.

89. **Nor is not**, the emphatic double negative.

91, 2. **wind me into him**, insinuate yourself into his confidence and find out for me what his real purposes are; **me**, as representing the old dative, = for me.

92, 3. **frame ... wisdom**, manage the matter in the way that seems wisest to you.

93. **I would ... resolution**, I would give up all that I possess to be fully assured one way or the other.

94, 5. **convey ... means**, manage the business with all the dexterity that circumstances allow; **convey**, frequently used in Shakespeare with the sense of secrecy or adroit management, and so as a euphemism for stealing.

97. 8. **though the wisdom ... thus**, though the knowledge of natural laws pretends to account for such phenomena by this or that supposition. The belief in astrology was still rampant in these days, and Shakespeare's plays abound in references to it.

98, 9. **yet nature ... effects**, yet the natural world (*i.e.* mankind as part of the order of nature) finds that disasters follow upon these portents: **divide**, become estranged; take up oppcsite sides in quarrels.

101. **the bond**, the recognized bond of love and duty towards each other: for **the**, expressing notoriety, see Abb. § 92.

101-4. **This villain ... child**, this villany of my son comes under the head of the prediction that the son shall be at enmity with the father; this deviation of the king from the instincts of nature comes under the head of the prediction that the father shall be at enmity with the child; **bias**, an inclination to one side, a tendency to deviate from the direct line; in its literal sense used especially of the inclination given to a bowl by the insertion of a weight on one side of it.

104. **the best ... time**, our best days.

105. **hollowness**, insincerity.

106. **disquietly**, causing disquiet, trouble.

106, 7. **it shall ... nothing**, you will lose nothing by doing so, *i.e.* it will be to your advantage to do so.

110. **foppery**, folly by which the world cheats itself; Du. *foppen*, to cheat.

111, 2. **often ... behaviour**, as often as not the result of our own extravagant indulgence; cp. *R. II.* ii. 2. 84, "Now comes the *sick hour* that his *surfeit* made": **make guilty of**, accuse as causing.

114. **treachers**, traitors.

115. **by spherical predominance**, in consequence of certain planets being in the ascendant at our birth, and so influencing our conduct.

116. **influence**, used by Shakespeare in this sense only with reference to the power exerted by celestial bodies; the modern sense being a relic of the astrological belief.

116, 7. **all that ... in**, all our sinful indulgences: **thrusting on**, incitement.

118. **pat**, in the very nick of time; cp. *Haml.* iii. 3. 73, "Now might I do it *pat*"; *M. N. D.* iii. 1. 2; Skeat says, "This can hardly be other than the same word as *pat*, a tap ... But the sense is clearly due to an extraordinary confusion with Du. *pas*, pat, fit, convenient in time" ... **catastrophe**, "just as the circumstance which decides the catastrophe of a play intervenes on the very nick of time, when the action is wound up to its crisis, and the audience are impatiently expecting it" (Heath); the word literally means a sudden turn, hence commonly a sudden turn of misfortune, a calamity.

119. **cue**, according to Butlers' *English Grammar*, **1634**, from "*Q*, a note of entrance for actors, because it is the first letter of *quando*, when, showing when to enter and speak'; according to Minsheu, *The Guide into the Tongues*, from "*qu*, a term used among stage-players, à [from] Lat. *qualis*, *i.e.* at what manner of word the actors are to begin to speak, one after another has done his speech"; according to Skeat, from F. *queue*, a tail, "as signifying the last words, or tail-end of the speech, of the preceding speaker."

119, 20. **Tom o' Bedlam**, "Tom's o' Bedlam, or Poor Toms, or Bedlams, or Bedlam beggars, or Abraham-men, were sturdy vagabonds, who, in the days of Shakespeare, were to be found in various parts of England" ... (Dyce, *Gloss.*). They pretended to have been confined in Bedlam (*i.e.* Bethlehem Hospital for Lunatics) and not to be in their right senses. **divisions**, estrangements, family quarrels; cp. above, l. 99, "brothers divide."

120, 1. **fa, sol, la, mi**, notes in the musical scale; "Edmund is merely singing to himself in order not to seem to observe Edgar's approach" (Wright); with which Furness compares

M. W. i. 3. 44, where **Mistress Quickly sings** "And down, down, adown-a," when Doctor Caius is approaching.

124, 5. **this other day**, only a day or two ago; the other day, as we now say.

125. **should**, would necessarily; was destined to; see Abb. § 325.

126. **busy yourself**, take the trouble to pay any attention to.

127, 8. I **promise** ... **unhappily**, I can tell you that his predictions are being fulfilled with only too unfortunate accuracy: as of, such for instance as those which have reference to. The whole of this passage to "Come, come" in Edmund's next speech is omitted in the folios, and has a very spurious look. Schmidt points out that there are in it no less than six instances of words not elsewhere used by Shakespeare, viz. **unnaturalness**, **menace** (as a noun), **malediction**, **dissipation**, **cohorts**, and **astronomical**.

131. **needless diffidences**, causeless distrust, suspicion, among friends; as in *K. J.* i. 1. 65, "thou dost shame thy mother, And wound her honour by this *diffidence*." Now-a-days the word means distrust of oneself, excessive modesty.

131, 2. **dissipation of cohorts**, if it means anything, must mean mutinous behaviour in troops; and perhaps refers to Gloucester's words, "in cities, mutinies." If it were worth while to conjecture, perhaps *consorts*, *i.e.* fellowship, would be as likely as anything.

133. **a sectary astronomical**, a disciple of astrological teaching.

142. **at my entreaty**, as I now entreat you.

143. **qualified**, modified.

144, 5. **with the mischief** ... **allay**, would scarcely be appeased even by injury to your person; for **mischief**, in this sense with a genitive, cp. *Macb.* i. 5. 51, "you murdering ministers, Whereon ... You wait on nature's *mischief*," *i.e.* the destruction of life.

147, 8. **have a continent forbearance**, restrain yourself and keep out of his way.

149. **fitly**, conveniently; in such a way that without risk you may be able to judge for yourself of what I have told you.

153. **to the best**, for the best; as is best for you.

154. **any good** ... **you**, any good intended towards you.

155, 6. **but faintly** ... **of it**, only in faint outline, not colouring the picture in its true horrors; **image and horror**, a hendiadys for *horrible image*.

157. **anon**, shortly; A.S. *on án*, in one (instant).

158. **I do** ... **business**, rest assured that your interests are safe in my hands.

161. **honesty**, simplicity of nature; straightforwardness.

162. **My ... easy**, my treacherous designs find it easy to guide as I please: **I see the business**, my way is clear to me.

163. **wit**, ingenuity.

164. **All with ... fit**, to me nothing comes amiss that I can shape to my own purposes.

SCENE III.

1. **for ... fool**, we should now say either 'for chiding his fool,' or 'for *the* chiding *of* his fool'; for the verbal with *of*, see Abb. § 178; **fool**, jester.

4, 5. **He flashes ... odds**, he bursts out into some violent excess that throws everything into confusion.

7. **On every trifle**, on the slightest cause.

9. **If you ... services**, if you show less alacrity to do his bidding.

10. **answer**, be responsible for, take upon myself.

12. **Put on ... please**, assume any appearance you like of being too tired of his service to attend on him with readiness; treat him with a neglect which shall show you are weary of his caprices.

13. **I'ld have ... question**, I shall be glad that he should demand what is the meaning of your behaviour; that matters should be brought to a point by his demanding, etc.

14. **If he ... it**, if he should be dissatisfied with the result: **let him**, the verb of motion omitted, as in i. 1. 275.

16. **Not ... over-ruled**, namely, that we are not going to allow ourselves to be controlled by his fancies: **Idle**, foolish.

17, 8. **That still ... away!** who (*i.e.* seeing that he) still wishes to exercise those privileges of authority which he has handed over to others.

19, 20. **Old fools ... abused**, old fools are no better than babes (old age is but "second childishness," cp. *A. Y. L.* ii. 7. 165), and must be treated with checks as well as flatteries, when those flatteries are seen to be turned to bad account, *i.e.* when old men, taking advantage of the indulgence with which their weaknesses are treated, arrogate to themselves absurd privileges; **as**, probably used for *as well as*, or perhaps = *for, instead of*. Various conjectures have been made, none of which seem satisfactory; and ll. 17-21, which do not appear in the folios, may have been rejected by Shakespeare when revising.

22. **have colder ... you**, be treated with less warmth of welcome by you and your fellow-servants.

23. **What ... matter**, do not trouble yourself as to what may be the consequence: **so**, to that purpose.

24, 5. **I would ... speak**, my object in having you behave in this manner is to afford myself an opportunity (in his complaints) of speaking out my mind on the subject, and such opportunity I shall gain in this way.

26. **my very course**, a course identical with mine.

SCENE IV.

1. **other accents**, *i.e.* other than my natural ones.

2. **defuse**, disguise; *i.e.* the tone, not the meaning. Shakespeare uses both *defuse* and *diffuse*, but it is doubtful whether they are not merely different spellings of the same word.

2-4. **my good ... likeness**, the good object I have in view may completely succeed in bringing about those results which led me to disguise my person; in **carry** there is probably an allusion to an arrow carrying to the mark, *i.e.* reaching the mark, though the construction is 'carry itself through'; **razed**, erased, blotted out, as of something written, or painted; cp. *Sonn.* xxv. 11, "The painful warrior ... After a thousand victories once foil'd, Is from the book of honour *razed* quite."

5. **If thou ... condemn'd**, if you can manage to act the part of a servant in the presence of him by whom you have been condemned to exile.

6. **So**, in that way.

7. **full of labours**, a most zealous servant.

8. **a jot**, the smallest particle of time; **jot**, from Gk. *iota*, *i*, the smallest letter of the alphabet.

11. **profess**, *i.e.* as to your capacities, set up for; cp. *M. A.* iii. 4. 68, "how long have you *professed* apprehension?" *i.e.* set up for being an intelligent person.

13. **put me in trust**, trust me with any business; especially an important business, as in *Oth.* ii. 3. 131, "I fear the *trust* Othello *puts him in.*"

14. **converse**, associate; the older and more literal sense of the word.

15. **cannot choose**, have no other choice; cannot help it: **to eat no fish**, probably, as Warburton explains it, am no papist, but a loyal subject, the papists, who on fast-days fed on fish, being accounted in Elizabeth's time as enemies to the government. Capell thinks that Kent meant he was a jolly fellow, and no lover of such meagre diet as fish.

29. **for a subject**, in your capacity as a subject.

30. **keep honest counsel**, honestly keep a secret.

33. **mar a curious tale**, spoil an elaborate story in relating it; curious, one beyond his simple understanding.

38. **to love**, as to love.

39. **to dote**, to be foolishly fond of.

41. **knave**, servant: A.S. *cnafa*, a later form of *cnapa*, a boy.

44. **the clotpoll**, the blockish fellow, boor, blockhead; *clot*, is an earlier form of *clod* (the original sense being a *ball*) which we still have in "*clod*-hopper," used for a clumsy fellow, literally one who hops over clods, i.e. a peasant, rustic. In *Cymb.* iv. 2. 184, we have **clotpoll** as a contemptuous term for the head.

47. **mongrel**, cur, wretched fellow: properly an animal of mixed breed and probably, according to Skeat, "short for *mong-er-el*, with double diminutive suffixes as in *cock-er-el*, *pick-er-el* (a small pike), so that it was doubtless originally applied to puppies and young animals ... The sense is 'a small animal of mingled breed'" *Ety. Dict.*

51. **in the roundest manner**, in the most off-hand terms possible: with no attempt to conceal his rudeness. Abbott, Bacon, *Essay of Truth*, remarks, "*round* was naturally used of that which is symmetrical and complete (as a circle is): then of anything *thorough*. Hence (paradoxically enough) 'I went *round* to work,' means 'I went straight to the point.'"

56. **as you were wont**, with which you were once accustomed to be treated.

57. **appears**, which is seen; for the omission of the relative, see Abb. § 244.

61. **my duty**, I, in my duty.

63. **rememberest**, remind; cp. *Temp.* i. 2. 243, "Let me *remember* thee what thou hast promised"; **conception**, suspicion; as in *Oth.* iii. 4. 156, "Pray heaven it be state-matters, ... And no *conception* nor no jealous toy Concerning you"; v. 2. 55, "the strong *conception* That I do groan withal."

64. **a most faint neglect**, a great coldness and want of proper attention; for **faint**, cp. *Tim.* iii. 1. 57, "Has friendship such a *faint* and milky heart?" ...

65. **jealous curiosity**, suspicious and microscopic sensitiveness; a sensitiveness about my dignity which made me look with unreasonable minuteness into every trifle of their behaviour towards me, made me construe into a matter of importance every trifling neglect which I fancied I detected; **which**, referring to his **own conception**.

66. **pretence**, design, intention; see above, 1. 2. 76.

67-8. **this two days**, this space of two days; cp. *Macb.* v. 5. 37, "Within *this* three mile"; *M. M.* i. 3. 21, "for *this* nineteen years"; so, *Cor.* iv. 1. 55, "but *one* seven years."

69. **into**, frequently used by Shakespeare before the names of countries.

72. **I would speak**, I desire to speak.

75. **My lady's father!** *i.e.* instead of giving me the title of king, do you speak of me as nothing more than your mistress' father?

78. **I beseech your pardon**, you must excuse my telling you so; said without any real penitence, but rather with a contemptuous courtesy.

79. **bandy looks**, meet my look of displeasure with such audacious assurance; to **bandy** was to beat to and fro, as a ball at tennis: cp. Webster's *White Devil*, p. 36, ed. Dyce, "That while he had been *bandying at tennis*"; the form *band* was also used, as in *The Passionate Morrice*, 1594, "Love shall be *banded* away with the *racket* of dissimulation." Cotgrave gives "*Iouër à bander et à racler contre.* To *bandy* against at Tennis; and (by Metaphor) to pursue with all *insolency*, rigour, extremity."

81. **Nor tripped neither**, *i.e.* I suppose you 'll say that you will not allow yourself to be tripped up, as one trips up an opponent at football.

84. **I'll teach you differences**, I'll teach you the difference between a king and a rascally servant like yourself.

85, 6. **If you ... tarry**, if you wished to be knocked down again, stay; *i.e.* if you do not wish to be knocked again, you will take yourself off; **measure**, by lying his full length: **go to**, an expression more frequently used, as here, in a contemptuous or indignant way; sometimes as an exhortation: **have you wisdom?** ah, you are wise enough (are you?) to see that you had better be off.

88. **earnest**, earnest-money; money given as a token of engaging the services of any one; literally a pledge, from M. E. *ernes*, a pledge with excrescent *t*; no connection with the adjective, though Shakespeare plays upon the two senses in *T. G.* ii. 1. 163, "*Speed.* But did you perceive her *earnest? Val.* She gave me none, except an angry word"; *C. E.* ii. 2. 24, "Hold, sir, for God's sake! now your jest is *earnest:* Upon what bargain do you give it me?"

89. **coxcomb**, "a hood resembling a monk's cowl, which, at a very early period, it was certainly designed to imitate, covered the head entirely, and fell down over part of the breast and shoulders. It was sometimes decorated with asses' ears, or else terminated in the neck and head of a cock, a fashion as old as

the fourteenth century. It often had the comb or crest only of the animal, whence the term *cock's-comb* or *coxcomb* was afterwards used to denote any silly upstart" (Douce, *Illustrations of Shakespeare*, p. 508).

91. **you were best**, for this ungrammatical remnant of ancient usage, the grammatical form being '(to) me (it) were better,' see Abb. § 230.

93. **one's part**, Abbott (§ 81) points out that we never use the possessive inflection of the unemphatic *one* as an *antecedent*.

94. **an**, see Abb. § 101: **canst ... sits**, cannot accommodate yourself to changes; *sit*, of the wind, is frequent in Shakespeare, *e.g. M. V.* i. 1. 18, *Haml.* i. 3. 56. We still use the similar phrase 'to know which way the wind blows.'

94, 5. **catch cold**, Farmer says, "*i.e.* be turned out of doors, and exposed to the inclemency of the weather": which is perhaps to take the words with a too literal seriousness.

96. **on 's**, of his.

97. **against his will**, unintentionally: **follow**, should follow; subjunctive indicating uncertainty.

98. **nuncle**, Nares, *Glossary*, points out that this was a familiar contraction of *mine uncle*, customary with fools when addressing their superiors; and that in *The Pilgrim*, iv. 1, Alinda, who has assumed the part of a fool, in meeting Alphonso, called him *nuncle*, and in return is called by him *naunt*, a contraction of *mine aunt*.

103. **the whip**, *i.e.* you will be whipped if you are insolent.

104. **must to kennel**, must be off to his kennel.

105. **Lady the brach**, Lady, as the name of the hound; **brach**, bitch. Some editors follow the folios, 'the Lady Brach'; but in i. *H. IV.* iii. 1. 240, we have, "I had rather hear Lady, my brach, howl in Irish."

106. **A pestilent ... me!** Moberly considers this "a passionate remembrance of Oswald's insolence"; but Lear would hardly attach so much importance to the incident. Possibly he means that the fool's words hit him hard in the remembrance of the way in which he had allowed flatterers to deceive him.

110. **showest**, allow people to know that you possess.

111. **Speak ... knowest**, do not think it necessary to speak out all you think.

112. **owest**, own.

113. **goest**, walk; cp. *T. G.* iv. 2. 20, "love Will creep in service where it cannot *go*."

114. **Learn ... trowest**, "don't believe all that thou learnest or hearest" (Schmidt).

115. **Set less ... throwest**, probably means, stake a smaller sum than that which you hope to win in throwing the dice, i.e. do not risk your money unless you can get odds given you.

119, 20. **Then 'tis ... for't**, as you gave me nothing for it, you can hardly expect from me anything worth having, any more than you would expect an opinion worth having from a lawyer whom you had not fee'd.

132. **Do thou ... stand**, do you represent him: I have adopted the insertion of **there** between **thou** and **for** suggested by the Camb. Edd. Hanmer proposed '*Or* do,' Grant White prints '*And* do,' but **thou there** answers exactly to **him here** in the former line.

134. **presently**, at once, immediately; as more generally in Shakespeare.

135. **motley**, the fools wore party-coloured clothes: the word means of different colours, spotted, from "O. F. *mattelé*, 'clotted, knotted, curdled, or curd-like'; *Cotgrave*" (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*)

137. **call me fool**, i.e. by implication.

141. **let me**, leave me alone, leave me in sole possession of folly; pretending to misunderstand Kent's words.

141, 2. **if I had ... out**, if a monopoly had been granted me; if a grant of this monopoly had been issued to me by royal letters patent; "a satire on the gross abuses of monopolies at that time, and the corruption and avarice of the courtiers who commonly went shares with the patentee" (Warburton).

143, 4. **they 'll be snatching**, they 'll try to have their fingers in the pie.

149, 50. **thou borest ... dirt**, you acted as foolishly as if, instead of riding through the dirty roads on your ass, you had dismounted and taken the animal on your shoulders to save his feet from being dirtied.

151. **bald**, used in a contemptuous sense, almost equal to 'foolish,' 'empty,' as in *Cor.* iii. 1. 164, "What should the people do with these *bald* tribunes?"

152, 3. **If I speak ... so**, instead of saying 'may I be whipped if I speak as a fool,' i.e. assuredly I do not speak as a fool, he says in effect what comes to the same thing, if the verdict is that I speak as a fool, let him be whipped who first delivered that verdict, for my words are words of wisdom; **find**, apparently used in the same technical sense as in *A. Y. L.* iv. i. 106, "and the foolish coroners of that age *found* it was 'Hero of Sestos'"; *Haml.* v. i. 5, "the crowner hath sat on her and *finds* it Christian burial."

154, 5. **Fools ... foppish**, "there never was a time when fools were less in favour; and the reason is, that they were never so

little wanted, for **wise** men now supply their place" (Johnson). For **foppish**, cp. above, i. 2. 110; for **grace**, the folios give *wit*, which does not seem to suit the second line of the couplet.

157. **apish**, fantastical.

159. **I have used it**, it has been my habit, practice.

159-60. **madest ... mother**, *i.e.* by giving them the power of punishment.

162, 3. **weep ... sung**, of course purposely transposed.

164. **play bo-peep**, amuse himself like a child.

173. **pared**, shaved off.

176. **what makes ... on?** what is that frown doing on your brow? *i.e.* what business have you to approach me with a frown on your brow? The literal **frontlet** was a narrow band across the forehead which had the effect of contracting the brows.

177. **i' the frown**, in the habit of frowning.

179, 80. **an O ... figure**, a mere cipher (without any digit to give it a value). For the converse idea of an additional cipher multiplying by ten, cp. *W. T.* i. 2. 6, 7, "and, therefore like a cipher, Yet standing in rich place, I multiply With one 'We thank you' many thousand moe That go before it"; and Peele, *Edward I.*, "'Tis but a cipher in agrum (*i.e.* arithmetic), and it hath made of ten thousand pounds a hundred thousand pounds."

182. **your face**, *sc.* by its angry expression.

183, 4. **He that ... some**, probably a fragment of some satirical ballad, as Dyce and Collier suppose.

185. **shealed**, shelled; emptied of its peas; A.S. *sceale*, shell or husk.

186. **all-licensed fool**, fool to whom all license is permitted; *license*, liberty exercised to an extravagant degree.

187. **other**, for other instances of this word used as a plural pronoun, see Abb. § 12.

188. **carp**, captiously find fault; the original sense of the word appears to have been that of 'boasting,' a sense which later on was affected by the figurative sense of the Lat. *carpere*, to calumniate. In its earliest English use it meant only to 'speak,' 'talk'; at present it means to 'cavil at,' frequently with the idea of doing so querulously or without much reason.

191. **To have found**, on the complete present after verbs of hoping, etc., see Abb. § 360.

193. **protect this course**, throw the shield of your sanction over this behaviour: **put it on**, stimulate, instigate, it.

194. **allowance**, approval; cp. below, ii. 2. 112, and *Oth.* i. 1. 128, "If this be known to you and your *allowance*."

194-9. **which if you ... proceeding**, if you should do so, your fault would not be allowed to go unnoticed, nor should we hesitate to redress the wrongs thus done; and if in our care for the welfare of the state, the measures we might take should cause you offence that it would otherwise be shameful to inflict upon you, the exigency of the occasion would justify our action as one of simple prudence; the sentence, as Moberly says, "labours under a plethora of relatives."

202. **it head ... it young**, the early provincial form of the old genitive is probably here used in 'baby-talk,' as in *W. T.* iii. 2. 109, "The innocent milk in *it* most innocent mouth." Moberly connects the fool's couplet with Goneril's speech thus: "'Yes,' replies the fool, 'and so the young cuckoo, wanting the nest to itself was under the regrettable necessity of biting off the head of its foster-mother the sparrow; which, under the circumstances, was not a shame, but an act of discretion.'" Cp. *A. C.* ii. 6. 28, i. *H. IV.* v. 1. 59-61.

203. **darkling**, in the dark; "there were some adverbs in O. E. originally dative feminine singular, ending in *-inga*, *-unga*, *-linga*, *-lunga*. A few of these, without the dative suffix, exist under the form *-ling* or *-long*, as *headlong* (O. E. *heedlinge*), *sideling*, *sidelong*, *darkling* (darklong), *flatling* and *flatlong*" (Morris, *Hist. Out.* p. 194). In answer to Sir Joshua Reynolds' supposition that these words of the fool are purposely incoherent in order to take the edge off too sharp a speech, Knight replies that they are not incoherent, and that Shakespeare "found the almost identical image applied to the story of Lear, as related by Spenser, *F. Q.* ii. 10. 30, 'But true it is that when the oyle is spent, The light goes out, and weeke is throwne away; So when he had resignd his regiment, His daughter gan despise his drouping day.'"

207. **fraught**, filled, stored; elsewhere in Shakespeare the preposition is *with*, not **of**. For the word used absolutely, cp. *H. V.* ii. 2. 139, "To mark the full-*fraught* man and best indued."

208. **dispositions**, moods; cp. *Haml.* i. 5. 172, "To put an antic *disposition* on": **of late ... you**, that have of late been changing you; cp. *Cor.* i. 1. 77, "You are *transported* by calamity Thither where more attends you."

211. **Jug**, according to Halliwell, an old nickname for Joan, and also a term of endearment.

214, 5. **Either ... lethargied** — either his mental powers are growing weak, and his capacity for distinguishing between what is real and what is imaginary has fallen into a state of torpor; the sentence is broken off without the alternative being stated. For **notion**, cp. *Macb.* iii. 1. 83, "all things else that might To half a soul and to a *notion* crazed Say 'Thus did Banquo.'"

215. **Ha! waking?... so, ha! am I awake? it cannot possibly be so.**

218. **I would learn that,** *sc.* who I am; he speaks without noticing the fool's words.

218-20. **for, by the ... daughters,** for, if I were to judge by the marks of sovereignty about me, as well as by my knowledge and reason, I should be persuaded that I was Lear and consequently that I had daughters, which cannot possibly be the case after the treatment I have received. This seems to be the meaning of the passage, which has been greatly debated. One difficulty that has been found is that Lear when making over his kingdom to his daughters had given up all marks of sovereignty. It is true that he had retained "The name and all the additions to a king" (i. 1. 134), but the "additions" can scarcely be the same as "marks."

221. **Which they ... father,** a continuation of the fool's last speech, "Lear's shadow."

223. **admiration,** astonishment; cp. *Haml.* iii. 2. 339, "your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and *admiration*"; *H. V.* ii. 2. 108, *Cymb.* i. 6. 38: **much ... savour,** much of the same taste, character. Cp. the verb in *T. N.* v. 1. 322, "This *savours* not much of distraction."

224. **Of other ... pranks,** of other caprices in which you have lately indulged.

225. **purposes,** intentions in speaking to you as I have done.

228. **debosh'd,** the old spelling of *debauched.* Wedgwood says that the radical idea seems to be to throw out of course, from F. *bauche,* a row, rank, or course of stones, or bricks, in building. Skeat is inclined to connect *bauche* with Gael. *balc,* a balk, boundary, ridge of earth, or the Icel. *bálkr,* a balk, beam.

230. **Shows,** appears.

232. **graced,** dignified: **doth speak,** calls for, makes itself heard in demanding; cp. *A. C.* i. 4. 29, "such time That ... *speaks* as loud As his own state and ours."

233. **be then desired,** grant the request.

235. **disquantity,** reduce in number; for other instances of *dis-*, = *un-*, see Abb. § 439.

236-8. **And the remainder ... you,** and let the remainder still attending you be such as shall be fitting a man of your age and as shall recognize what they are and what you are, *i.e.* shall behave in conformity with their position and yours. Abb. (§ 354) takes this as an instance of the noun and infinitive used as a subject; perhaps it is rather a confusion of constructions; for **depend,** = be a dependant of, cp. *T. C.* iii. 1. 5, "Sir, I do *depend* upon the lord"; for **besort,** cp. the substantive, *Oth.* i. 3. 239, "With

such accommodation and *beseem* As levels with her breeding, i.e. such suitable accommodation as, etc.

241. **Yet ... daughter,** I have still (though you have ceased to be such) a daughter who will behave to me like a daughter.

243. **Make ... betters,** treat as servants those who are in every way their superiors.

244. **Woe ... repents,** woe to him who finds out his mistake too late to remedy it; here of course the **too late** is now that he has given away all power over his daughter.

245. **your will,** in accordance with what you wish.

248. **sea-monster,** it is perhaps not necessary to suppose that Shakespeare here meant any particular sea-monster; but if he did, it was probably the one slain by Hercules in delivering Hesione, to which reference is made in *M. V.* iii. 2. 57, "young Alcides, when he did redeem The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy To the *sea-monster*."

249. **kite,** used again as a term of reproach in *H. V.* ii. 1. 80, "the lazar *kite*"; *A. C.* iii. 13. 89, "Ah, you *kite!*" The ignoble habits of this bird in preying upon sickly and wounded victims were no doubt known to Shakespeare.

250. **of choice ... parts,** probably, as Wright thinks, the superlative inflection belongs to **choice** as well as to **rarest**, see Abb. § 398; **parts,** qualities, gifts; we still use the phrase 'a man of *parts*,' *i.e.* one endowed with good natural abilities.

252, 3. **And in ... name,** and with most scrupulous observance maintain the dignity that belongs to them; some editors follow Collier in reading *worship*, but Shakespeare constantly uses the plural of abstract nouns where more than one person is spoken of.

255, 6. **That, like ... place,** so hideous that, like an engine, you wrenched the frame of my nature (my natural disposition) from its proper station (from that which it naturally held to, its firmest ties); the **engine** here meant is the rack, which dislocated the limbs of those placed upon it; cp. below, v. 3. 212-4, "he hates him much That would upon the rack of this tough world Stretch him out longer"; for the transposition of **my**, cp. below, l. 306, "her brow of youth," and see Abb. § 423.

257. **the gall,** such gall as was already in it.

258. **this gate,** it being his brain to which he owed it that he had so misunderstood Cordelia.

259. **dear,** which you should have valued highly.

261. **moved,** stirred to anger, excited.

267. **derogate,** depraved, fallen from the nobleness that should be its: **spring,** subjunctive used optatively.

268. **must teem**, is destined to be a mother.

269. **Create ... spleen**, make her child entirely of malice, spite.

269, 70. **that it may ... her**, that it may live to be a cross-grained, unnatural, torment to her; **thwart**, not elsewhere in Shakespeare as an adjective, though in a literal sense, Milton has it *P. L.* viii. 132, "Moved contrary with *thwart* obliquities"; x. 1075, "the slant lightning, whose *thwart* flame," etc.

271. **in her ... youth**, in her youthful brow, in her brow while she is still young; see note on l. 255, above.

272. **fret**, wear away; eat out; A.S. *fretan*, contracted from *for-etan*, *for-*, intensive, and *etan*, to eat.

273. **pains and benefits**, maternal cares and proofs of affection; little more than a hendiadys for 'kindly care,' as **laughter and contempt** for 'contemptuous ridicule.'

275, 6. **How sharper ... child**, cp. *A. Y. L.* ii. 7. 174-9.

277. **whereof comes this?** what is the cause of this bitter wrath?'

278. **to know**, about finding out.

279, 80. **But let ... it**, but let his present mood have such free play as his dotage allows it, as he in his dotage chooses to give it.

281. **at a clap**, at one stroke.

282. **Within a fortnight!** to think that she should have done this when I have not been with her a fortnight! See *Introduction, Duration of Action.*

286. **Should make ... them**, should spend themselves upon one so unworthy to call them forth.

287, 8. **The untented ... thee!** may every organ of feeling in you be pierced by a father's curse beyond all cure! To *tent* is to probe with a roll of linen, a *tent*, with a view to cleansing a wound and so enabling it to heal; and **untented** is here used of wounds that cannot be tented, as "unvalued jewels," *i.e.* invaluable, *R. III.* i. 4. 27, "unavoided changes," *i.e.* inevitable, *R. II.* ii. 1. 268: **fond**, foolish.

289. **Beweep**, *i.e.* if you are foolish enough to beweep.

290. **lose**, waste.

291. **temper**, moisten, and so make fit for moulding.

292. **yet**, still, as yet.

293. **comfortable**, "this word,—and in like manner *uncomfortable* and *discomfortable*,—are [in Shakespeare] uniformly applied to a person, or to a thing personified, the idea of will and purpose

being always implied in them" (Walker, *Crit. Exam.* i. pp. 98, 9).

296. **the shape**, *i.e.* of king.

297. **warrant**, Walker notes that usually in Shakespeare, as here, this word is metrically a monosyllable.

299, 300. **I cannot ... you**, I cannot allow the great love I bear you to make me so blind to your faults.

301. **content**, *i.e.* be content, satisfied; do not trouble yourself about these matters (that do not concern you).

307, 8. **should sure ... halter**, should certainly be hanged, if I could exchange my cap for a halter.

310. **This man ... counsel**, I have given this father of mine good advice.

311. **'Tis politic**, said of course ironically.

312. **At point**, ready prepared for any emergency.

313. **buzz**, rumour, whisper; cp. *Haml.* iv. 5. 90, "Wants not *buzzers* to infect his ear," *i.e.* chattering fellows.

314. **He may ... powers**, he may use them as a protection behind which to shelter himself in his foolish fancies.

315. **in mercy**, at their mercy, as we should now say.

316. **fear too far**, allow your fears to carry you to too great lengths.

317. **take away**, remove from my path.

318. **to be taken**, *sc.* as in a snare.

320. **sustain**, maintain; as in i. 1. 124.

321. **the unfitness**, the impropriety of her doing so.

322. **What**, an exclamation of eagerness, impatience.

324. **away to horse**, quickly mount and be off on your journey.

325. **full**, fully: **particular**, special; according to Schmidt, personal, individual, private.

327. **compact it**, give consistency to what I have told her.

329. **This milky ... yours**, this soft and gentle way in which you would proceed.

330. **under pardon**, if you will excuse my saying so.

331, 2. **You are ... mildness**, those who witness your line of action blame you much more for your want of wisdom than they praise you for this mildness which is sure to have a bad result; **attask'd**, taken to task; the folios give *at task*, which some editors retain in the sense of 'liable to correction.'

333. **How far**, *i.e.* into the future.

336. **the event**, let us await the result.

SCENE V.

2, 3. **Acquaint ... letter,** do not tell my daughter anything more of what has occurred than is necessary in answering questions that arise out of my letter.

8. **kibes,** chilblains; sores that come chiefly on the hands and feet from great cold; for **brains,** Walker would read *brain*: Wright points out that in *A. W.* iii. 2. 16, we have "the brains of my Cupid's knocked out"; though possibly that is a case of confusion of proximity.

10, 1. **thy wit ... slip-shod,** your wit will never need to wear loose slippers on account of the chilblains on it; a covert way of saying that Lear has no brains; **slip-shod,** loosely shod, *i.e.* shoed.

13. **kindly,** used ambiguously; (1) affectionately, (2) after her kind, nature.

14. **as like ... apple,** differs from her sister no more than a crab from an apple; the difference between which is mainly one of taste.

17. **She will ... to a crab,** *i.e.* just as sourly as her sister.

22. **I did her wrong,** Lear's mind recurs to Cordelia.

30. **I will ... nature,** I will banish all thoughts of fatherly love: **So kind a father!** to think that so loving a father as I have been should receive such treatment at their hands!

32. **Thy asses,** *i.e.* stupid servants.

32, 3. **the seven stars,** it is probable that the Pleiades are meant here, though Furness suggests the Great Bear. In i. *H. IV.* i. 2. 16, we have "we that take purses go by the moon and the *seven stars*," and as according to one mythological story the Pleiades were on earth the virgin companions of Artemis (in later Greek times deified as the Moon), they may have been regarded as her companions in the heavens; on the other hand, the Pleiades, though the ancients steered by them, set in the winter, and Falstaff would perhaps be more likely to speak of steering by the Great Bear. The Pleiades were however often called "the seven stars."

36. **To take ... perforce!** to think that she should forcibly deprive me of what she had before so willingly allowed me! Johnson thinks Lear is referring to a forcible resumption of his kingly power, which he is contemplating; but the words **Monster ingratitude!**, following so immediately afterwards, seem against this explanation.

39. **How 's that?** wherefore.

43. **in temper,** in my wonted disposition, in my right mind; cp. *A. C.* i. 1. 8, "his captain's heart, ... reneges all *temper*," *i.e.* refuses to submit to any moderation.

ACT II. SCENE I.

1. **Save thee**, *i.e.* may God protect you; a common form of courteous salutation.

7. **ones**, news, as often in Shakespeare, being plural.

8. **ear-kissing arguments**, subjects as yet spoken of only with the greatest caution, the lips of the speaker almost touching the ears of those to whom the news is confided; for **argument**, in this sense, cp. *A. W.* ii. 3. 7, "the rarest *argument* of wonder"; and absolutely, *M. A.* i. 1. 258, "Well, if ever thou dost fall from this faith, thou wilt prove a notable *argument.*"

10. **likely**, probable: **toward**, at hand, imminent; cp. iii. 3. 17, iv. 6. 209.

14. **The better! best!** so much the better for my purposes, in fact the best thing that could possibly happen!

15. **This weaves ... business**, this coming of the duke cannot but tally with my designs. Edmund sees the opportunity of winning over the duke, through Regan, to support him in his project of getting Edgar disinherited.

16. **hath set ... brother**, has set guards round the castle to capture my brother if he shows himself.

17. **of a queasy question**, of a ticklish nature; **queasy**, literally squeamish, that may easily be made sick; so *M. A.* ii. 1. 399, "his *queasy* stomach," his inclination which would readily revolt against the idea, be nauseated by it.

18. **briefness ... work!** may speed and good fortune work in my behalf!

20. **watches**, has set a watch to take you.

23. **Have you ... Cornwall?** *i.e.* have you not good reason to avoid the Duke of Cornwall in consequence of something you have said against him, which will no doubt have been carried to his ears?

24. **i' the haste**, with great haste; **the**, emphatic.

26. **Upon his party**, in favour of his side and against the Duke of Albany; in that way, by speaking first against one and then against the other, making both your enemies; for **Upon**, cp. *Cymb.* v. 2. 188, "Our care and pity is so much *upon* you"; *K. J.* i. 1. 34, "*Upon* the right and party of her son"; ii. 1. 237, "whose protection Is most divinely vowed *upon* the right of him it holds."

27. **Advise yourself**, consider, reflect.

29. **In cunning**, as a pretence.

30. **quit you well**, make a show of fighting vigorously, of acquitting yourself well in the combat.

31. **Yield ... father**, those words are spoken loudly so as to be heard by his father.

33. **beget opinion**, induce a belief.

34, 5. **I have ... sport**, referring to a not uncommon practice with young gallants of stabbing their arms to drink the health of their mistresses in blood.

38. **his sharp sword out**, with his sharp sword drawn.

39. **Mumbling of**, in the act of mumbling; for the verbal with **of**, see Abb. § 178.

40. **To stand ... mistress**, to aid him with her favour.

45. **But that**, Abbott (§ 287) takes **that** as a suffix to **When**, l. 42, = but when that, etc. It seems possible, however, that the construction depends upon **Persuade**; when he could not persuade me to your murder, or prevent my telling him that, etc.

50. **how loathly ... stood**, what horror and opposition I showed.

51. **fell motion**, venomous attack; cp. *T. N.* iii. 4. 304, "he gives me the stuck in with such a mortal *motion*."

52. **prepared**, ready drawn for that purpose: **home**, frequently used by Shakespeare adverbially of any vigorous or effectual action.

53. **unprovided**, defenceless.

54, 5. **But when ... encounter**, but when he saw that all my courage, animated by the justice of my cause, was nobly roused to meet him; for **when** Staunton proposes *whe'r*, *i.e.* whether, which simplifies the construction, but does not seem necessary: **alarum'd**, Ital. *all' arme*, to arms! a battle-cry.

56. **Or whether gasted**, or whether it was that he was alarmed; we now write *ghastly*, *aghast*, but (as in *ghost*) the *h* is an intruder, the A.S. verb being *gǽstan*, to terrify.

59. **And found ... despatch**, and when he is found—then there is but one word for him, kill. The pause after **found** gives expressiveness to the denunciatory **despatch**.

60. **arch**, generally explained as *chief*, with the sense the word bears in composition, *arch*-angel, *arch*-duke, etc. Steevens in support of that meaning cites Heywood, *If you Know not me, you Know Nobody*, "Poole, that *arch* of truth and honesty." It seems to me that **arch** here is used in the sense of an arch of a building, that which gives it its main support, and to be so used in Heywood (whom Steevens misquotes). The passage is, "The Queen is much besotted on these Prelates, For there's another raised, more base than he, Poole that Arch, for truth and honesty,"

where *raised* and *base* seem to be parts of the same metaphor; unless the line is corrupt and should be 'Poole, that arch-*foe to* truth and honesty.'

61. **proclaim it**, make this proclamation.

63. **caitiff**, literally, a captive; hence used of a miserable wretch, whether morally or physically: **to the stake**, to be burnt alive.

65. **dissuaded him**, attempted to persuade him against.

66. **pight**, pitched, *i.e.* firmly fixed; used in the compound "straight-*pight*" of the erect figure of Minerva, *Cymb.* v. 5. 164; the old preterite of *pitch* was *pight* or *pighte*, and the past participle, *piht* or *pight*. **with curst speech**, with bitter reproaches.

67. **discover him**, to reveal his designs.

68. **unpossessing**, incapable of inheriting; so the Bastard in *K. J.* i. 1. 177, speaks of himself as "landless."

69. **If I would stand**, if I chose to stand.

69-71. **would the ... faith'd**, do you imagine that any trust reposed in you, or any virtue or worth supposed to belong to you, would cause your words to be believed?

73. **character**, handwriting; literally stamp, mark.

73, 4. **I 'ld turn ... practice**, I would make it appear as nothing else than your temptation, plot, and accursed stratagem; **suggestion**, with one exception, always with this idea in Shakespeare; the word, says Hunter on *Macb.* i. 1. 134, is a theological term, one of the three procurators or tempters of sin; delight and consent being the others; **practice**, like the verb, *practise*, constantly in this sense.

75, 6. **And thou ... thought**, and you must suppose the whole world to be idiots if they did not see; for the transposition of the negative, see Abb. § 305.

77, 8. **Were very ... it**,' "so great are the profits of my death that the spurs to make thee seek it are most powerful, and *teem with incitements* thereto" (Furness), thus bringing out the full force of **pregnant**.

78. **Strong**, the folios give *strange*, which some editors prefer, in the sense of enormous, unheard of, as in *Haml.* i. 5. 28; *A. C.* iv. 15. 3: **fasten'd**, confirmed, hardened.

79. **I never got him**, he is no son of mine.

81. **ports**, sea-ports.

82. **must grant**, cannot possibly refuse.

82, 3. **his picture ... near**, Furness quotes *Nobody and Somebody*, 1606, to show that this was a practice in Shakespeare's

day; "Let him be straight imprinted to the life: His picture shall be set on every stall, And proclamation made, that he that takes him, Shall have a hundred pounds of *Somebody.*"

84. **due note**, such information as will enable them to recognize him.

85. **natural**, "this word is here used with great art, in the double sense of *illegitimate* and as opposed to *unnatural*, which latter epithet is implied upon Edgar" (Hudson).

86. **capable**, Lord Campbell, *Shakespeare's Legal Acquirements*, pp. 80, 1, notices this as "a remarkable example of Shakespeare's use of technical legal phraseology ... In forensic discussions respecting legitimacy, the question is put, whether the individual whose *status* is to be determined is 'capable,' *i.e.* capable of inheriting; but it is only a lawyer who would express the idea of legitimising a natural son by simply saying—I'll work the means To make him capable."

89. **comes too short**, is inadequate to the offence.

93. **named**, *sc.* in baptism; stood godfather to.

94. **shame ... hid**, shame would bid me hide the fact.

98. **was of that consort**, was one of their associates.

99. **ill affected**, treacherously disposed.

100. **put him on**, incited him to.

101. **To have**, in order that they may enjoy.

105. **I 'll not be there**, they will not find me there to receive them.

106, 7. **have shown ... office**, have behaved as a dutiful son should do.

108. **bewray**, Wright points out that this word and *betray* are used almost interchangeably, but in the former there is no notion of treachery inherent; for **practice**, see note on l. 73, above.

112. **Be fear'd ... harm**, be feared in respect of any harm he may do; give any one cause to fear his actions; *sc.* because he will be put to death.

112, 3. **make ... please**, in following out your purpose (that of taking Edgar), use my authority in any way you please, consider all my resources at your command.

114. **virtue and obedience doth**, the singular **doth**, the two substantives being regarded as = virtuous obedience.

117. **seize on**, eagerly appropriate as an ally.

118. **Truly, however else**, faithfully, whatever else my shortcomings.

120. **threading dark-eyed night**, the figure being that of threading a needle the eye of which is almost too small to be seen; cp. *K. J.* v. 4. 11, "Un*thread* the rude *eye* of rebellion"; *Cor.* iii. 1. 124, "They would not *thread* the gates."

121. **poise**, weight, importance; the folios give *prize*.

122. **must have ... advice**, must ask, and make use of, your advice.

124. **Of differences**, regarding disputes.

124, 5. **which I best ... home**, which I thought it most fitting to answer away from home; for instances of **from**, = away from, see Abb. § 41. The second quarto gives *lest*, for which the Camb. Edd. read *least*, taking **from** in its more ordinary sense. **several**, those going to her father and those to her sister.

127. **Lay ... bosom**, do not allow yourself to sorrow at Edgar's treachery.

128. **business**, a trisyllable; see Abb. § 468; the folios give *businesses*.

129. **which craves ... use**, which urgently demands that we should make prompt use of that advice.

SCENE II.

1. **Good dawning**, Delius remarks that the time is night, and that as usually in Shakespeare Oswald greets Kent, whom he does not recognize, with that time of day which is approaching, not with that which is present.

5. **if thou lovest me**, merely a courteous form, as we should now say 'if you will be so good.'

8. **Lipsbury pinfold**, where **Lipsbury** was, if there was such a place, and what the peculiarity of its **pinfold**, or pound, has not been discovered. Jennens conjectures *Ledbury*, Collier's MS. Corrector gives *Finsbury*. Nares thinks "it is just possible that it might mean the teeth, as being the pinfold within the *lips*. The phrase would then mean, 'If I had you in my teeth'"; but Kent could hardly expect such a jest to be intelligible to Oswald; **pinfold**, or pound, an enclosure in villages in which stray animals were shut up, a fine being exacted when they were let out again.

12. **know me for**, know me to be.

14. **three-suited**, probably as Steevens takes it, one who had but three suits of raiment. Delius objects that it cannot refer to his poverty, and refers to Edgar's words, iii. 4. 122, where speaking of his own former wealth, he says of himself, "who hath had *three suits* to his back." But what to him in his then state would be comparative wealth, might be spoken of as

poverty in the case of a steward.; and the epithets **beggarly, hundred-pound, worsted-stocking**, are all in keeping with such a meaning. Steevens compares Jonson's *Silent Woman*, iv. 2, "And the brace of baboons answer'd, Yes; and said thou wert a pitiful poor fellow ... and hadst nothing but *three suits* of apparel" ... **hundred-pound**, *i.e.* that being all his wealth. Steevens compares Middleton, *Phœnix*, iv. 3. 55, ed. Bullen, "How 's this? am I used like *a hundred-pound* gentleman?"

15. **worsted-stocking**, "the stockings in England in the reign of Queen Elizabeth were remarkably expensive, and scarce any other kind were worn, even, ... by those who had not above forty shillings a year wages" ... (Steevens): **lily-liver'd**, cowardly; with no blood in the liver; cp. *Macb.* v. 3. 15, "Go, prick thy face, and over-red thy fear, Thou *lily-liver'd* boy!"; *T. N.* iii. 2. 67, where Sir Andrew's cowardice is spoken of, "if he were opened, and you find so much blood in his liver as will clog the foot of a flea, I 'll eat the rest of the anatomy." **action-taking**, who, instead of fighting, would bring an action for assault against any one who struck you.

16. **glass-gazing**, ever admiring yourself in a looking-glass: **superserviceable**, explained by Johnson and Schmidt as *over-officious*. Wright, however, adds that the word must also signify "one who is above his work," and this seems to me the only sense here: **finical**, foppish, over-fine.

16, 7. **one-trunk-inheriting**, whose possessions are all contained in a single trunk; to *inherit*, whether used absolutely or transitively, frequent in Shakespeare without any idea of receiving from a progenitor.

18. **addition**, the titles I bestow upon you, or which rightly belong to you.

20. **of thee**, by you.

21. **varlet**, see note on ii. 4. 182.

22. **Is it ... ago**, *i.e.* it is not two days ago.

24, 5. **a sop o' the moonshine**, "plainly," says Entwhistle, "Kent's intention is to make a 'sop' of him in the sense of *steeping* him in his own blood, by the consenting light of the moon." Entwhistle is ridiculing Nares' idea that there is an allusion to the old dish called 'eggs in moonshine,' a receipt for which Nares gives.

25, 6. **cullionly**, despicable, mean: **barber-monger**, *i.e.* a fellow who is in constant association with barbers to trim his hair, beard, etc. Cp. "ballad-*monger*," i. *H. IV.* iii. 1. 130; "carpet-*monger*," *M. A.* v. 2. 32; "fancy-*monger*," *A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 382; "fashion-*monger*," *R. J.* ii. 4. 34, in all of which there is the same contemptuous sense.

29, 30. **take vanity ... father**, side with that frivolous piece of worthlessness against the royal dignity of her father; **puppet**, properly a little doll whose actions were controlled by strings; here merely an epithet of contempt: **carbonado**, slash; a *carbonado* is a rasher, a piece of meat cut for broiling; Span. *carbonado*, meat boiled on a gridiron, Span. *carbon*, coal.

31. **come your ways**, come along; **ways**, the old genitive used adverbially; see Abb. § 25.

33, 4. **you neat slave**, you finical rascal: Walker explains **neat** as *pure, unmixed*, as in '*neat* wine,' etc.

37. **With you ... please**, "the matter is with you, I will deal with you" (Dyce). I do not know whether it is necessary to refer **With you** to **the matter**; Kent may mean only 'as you will not allow me to fight with him, I am ready to fight with you, if you are willing to take his place'; **goodman boy**, my fine, brave, fellow; **goodman**, usually employed towards old men, like 'gaffer,' a corruption of 'grandfather'; the expression **goodman boy** occurs in the same sarcastic sense in *R. J.* i. 5. 79.

38. **flesh ye**, give you a taste of fighting; literally to feed with flesh for the first time, to initiate, as young dogs are encouraged to hunting by having pieces of flesh given them; cp. i. *H. IV.* v. 4. 133, "full bravely hast thou *flesh'd* Your maiden sword." Here Kent insinuates that Edmund had never before engaged in combat.

40. **upon your lives**, on peril of losing your lives.

43. **difference**, cause of quarrel.

45. **you have ... valour**, you have shown such activity in fighting; said of course ironically.

46. **disclaims in thee**, disclaims all share in making you; Steevens compares Jonson, *The Case is Altered*, v. 4, "No, I *disclaim in* her; I spit at her." It occurs also in *The Fox*, iii. 6, "And then his father's oft *disclaiming in* him;" where Gifford says that the phrase, though common in our old writers, was going out of use at this time, and refers to two instances in *Every Man in His Humour* which in the later edition were altered from *disclaim in* to *disclaim*: **a tailor made thee**, you are no better than a lay figure dressed up in clothes; cp. *Cymb.* iv. 2. 81, "thy tailor, rascal, Who is thy grandfather: he made those clothes, Which, as it seems, make thee."

49. **made him so ill**, made such a poor creature as he is.

52, 3. **at suit ... beard**, out of pity for his age.

54. **unnecessary**, because its sound can be expressed by *s* or by compounds with *s*.

55. **unbolted villain**, thorough scoundrel; **unbolted**, literally

unsifted, coarse, used of mortar from which none of the impurities have been removed.

57. **wagtail**, insignificant, contemptible, creature; literally a small bird, called also 'wagstart.'

58. **beastly**, more like a brute beast than a man.

59. **hath a privilege**, may be excused for using strong language.

62. **Who ... honesty**, who has no honesty about him.

63. **holy cords**, "the metaphor is taken from the cords of the sanctuary; and the fomenters of family differences are compared to those sacrilegious rats" (Steevens); these cords were those by which the victim was bound before being sacrificed; cp. *Psalms*, cxviii. 27, "bind the sacrifice with *cords*, even unto the horns of the altar": **a-twain**, in twain, in two; formerly **twain** was masculine, *two*, feminine and neuter, but this distinction was early disregarded.

64. **intrinse**, apparently a shortened form of *intrinsic*, inward, with the sense of closely interwoven.

64, 5. **smooth ... rebel**, flatter every outburst of passion to which their masters give way; Abbott takes **every** here as plural; it seems more probable that **rebel** is due to the intervening plural **lords**.

67. **Renege**, deny; with the *g* hard, as in *A. C.* i. 1. 8, "*reneges* all temper": **halcyon**, a reference to the old belief that a stuffed halcyon or kingfisher, if hung up, would show from what point of the compass the wind blew, by turning in that direction. Cp. Marlowe, *Jew of Malta*, i. 1. 39, "But how now stands the wind? Into what corner peers my *halcyon's* bill?"

68. **every ... vary**, every varying gale; a hendiadys.

69. **but following**, but the habit of following.

70. **epileptic**, contorted like that of one in an epileptic fit; distorted with hideous grins.

71. **Smile ... speeches**, ridicule my words by your grins; if **Smile** is the genuine word (it is spelt *Smoyle* or *Smoile* in all the quartos and all the folios except the fourth), it must be regarded as transitive; see Abb. § 200: **as**, as though.

72. **Sarum plain**, Salisbury common.

73. **Camelot**, where, according to the old romances, Arthur kept his court, was, says Selden, in Somersetshire; and near it "there are many large moors, upon which great numbers of geese are bred, so that many other places in England are from thence supplied with quills and feathers" (Hanmer).

75. **How fell you out?** what made you quarrel?

79. **likes me not**, does not please me.

81. **occupation**, trade, profession.

86, 7. **constrains ... nature**, Staunton and Clarke take **his** as = *its*, the latter explaining, "Cornwall implies, in what he says of Kent, that he distorts the style of straightforward speaking quite from its nature, which is sincerity; whereas he makes it a cloak for craft"; and this seems in keeping with what follows. The radical idea of **garb** is preparation, and nowadays we use the word in its literal sense of 'dress' and in its figurative sense of 'manner,' 'fashion.' Shakespeare always uses it figuratively, in *H. V.* v. 1. 80, of the manner of speech; in *Cor.* iv. 7. 44, and *Haml.* ii. 2. 390, of outward demeanour; in *Oth.* ii. 1. 315, of the manner of representing facts.

88. **he must speak truth**, he is constrained by his nature to, etc.

89. **An they ... plain**, if people will recognize this fact without resenting it, well and good; if not, the only excuse he troubles himself to make is that he is a plain-spoken man.

90. **These kind of knaves**, "the two nouns connected by 'of' seem regarded as a compound noun with plural termination" (Abb. § 412).

91. **Harbour**, give cover to; used in a bad sense, as we still speak of harbouring criminals; cp. *T. G.* i. 2. 41, "Dare you presume to *harbour* wanton lines?"

92, 3. **Than twenty ... nicely**, than a score of cringing, obsequious fellows who are so punctilious in discharging their duties to the fullest extent; cp. *Oth.* i. 1. 45-7, "Many a duteous and knee-crooking knave That, doting on his own obsequious bondage, Wears out his time"; for *observe*, = show respect to, do homage to, cp. *Tim.* iv. 3. 212, "And let his very breath whom thou 'lt *observe*, Blow off thy cap."

95. **Under ... aspect**, with the permission of your noble favour; Delius points out that **aspect**, like **influence** in the next line, is used in a secondary astrological sense.

96, 7. **like the wreath ... front**, probably an allusion to the wreath of curls round the head of the Sun-God in old coins, representing the lambent rays on the circumference of the sun's disc.

98, 9. **To go out ... much**, my meaning, purpose, in this is to abandon that plain manner of speech with which you find such fault.

100. **plain knave**, evident knave.

101-2. **though I should ... to 't**, even though it were possible for me to soften your wrath into entreaty that I would do so. Schmidt takes **your displeasure** as "scornfully opposed to the title of '*your grace*.'"

106. **To strike at**, to aim a blow at: **misconstruction**, misrepresentation.

107. **conjunct**, in league, in concert; the folios give *compact*.

108. **being down**, I being on the ground; for the omission of the noun before the participle, see Abb. § 378.

109. **And put ... man**, and assumed such a valorous demeanour.

110. **That worthied him**, as exalted him into a hero; perhaps with an allusion to the 'Nine Worthies' to whom Shakespeare repeatedly refers.

111. **For him ... self-subdued**, for making an attack upon him who, lying on the ground, was by that fact incapable of defence.

112-3. **And, in ... again**, and having so valorously fleshed his courage, was thereby stimulated to attack me here again. For **fleshment**, see note on l. 38, above.

113, 4. **None of these ... fool**, there is not one of these rogues and cowards to whom in the matter of boasting Ajax is not a mere tiro. An allusion to the proud boasts of Ajax after his slaughter of the Grecian flocks and herds which in his madness he mistook for his enemies, the chieftains of the army.

114. **the stocks**, a contrivance for the punishment of vagrants and petty offenders, consisting of two blocks of wood, one above the other, working on a hinge, with the lower edge of the upper block and the upper edge of the lower block cut away sufficiently to admit the legs of the offender, which were then confined by the end opposite to the hinge being fastened by a hasp and padlock. These stocks were to be seen in every village not very many years ago.

115. **reverend**, *sc.* in point of years.

119. **You shall do**, you will inevitably be doing; cp. *Macb.* iii. 4. 57, "if you much note him, *You shall* offend him"; and see Abb. § 315: **show too bold malice**, display an audacity of malice which you will afterwards repent.

121. **Stocking**, by putting in the stocks.

126. **You should ... so**, you certainly would not treat me thus: **being**, you being; see Abb. § 378.

127. **colour**, character, kind; cp. *A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 435, "boys and women are for the most part cattle of this *colour*."

128. **bring away**, bring here, *sc.* from where they now are.

STAGE DIRECTION. **Stocks brought out**, Farmer notes that "formerly in great houses, as still in some colleges, there were moveable stocks for the correction of servants."

131. **check**, reprove: **your ... correction**, the indignity with which you propose to punish him.

133. **pilferings**, petty thefts; O. F. *pelfre*, booty, pelf.

134. **must ... ill**, cannot help resenting.

135. **so slightly ... messenger**, thus insulted in the person of his, etc.

136. **Should ... restrain'd**, should find that he had been confined in this manner: **answer**, be accountable for.

137. **may**, is likely to if I allow her gentleman to be thus abused: for the double comparative, **more worse**, see Abb. § 11.

139. **For following her affairs**, for showing his zeal on her behalf.

143. **rubb'd**, a metaphor from the game of bowls, in which a *rub* is anything that hinders the course of the bowl.

144. **watch'd**, kept awake; cp. *T. G.* iv. 2. 141, "it hath been the longest night That e'er I *watch'd*."

146. **may grow ... heels**, may need mending; may be in a bad plight like stockings worn out at the heels. Perhaps, as Furness suggests, Kent may jocosely mean that what is usually a metaphor is with him a reality; perhaps also with a pun on stocking and stockings.

147. **Give you good morrow**! may God give you a good morning; a courteous expression used both at meeting and parting in the morning.

149. **that must ... saw**, whose destiny it is to prove in your own person the truth of the old proverb; cp. *M. N. D.* ii. 2. 68, "On whose eyes I might *approve* This flower's force in stirring love."

150, 1. **Thou out of ... sun**! an old proverb meaning to pass from a good condition to one that was worse; here of course of Lear's prospect of faring worse at Regan's hands than he had at Goneril's.

152. **this under globe**, this sublunary world.

153. **comfortable**, see note on i. 4. 293.

154, 5. **Nothing ... misery**, scarcely anything but misery sees miracles; no one but a man as miserable as I am could expect such miraculous comfort as this letter brings me.

157. **obscured course**, *i.e.* the manner of his life in which his rank has been laid aside for the disguise of a servant.

157-9. **and shall ... remedies**, possibly this obscure, and perhaps corrupt, passage may mean, 'and who out of this state of hideous confusion shall, by seeking, find time to give the proper remedies to the misfortunes which have fallen upon us.' Various conjectures and methods of punctuation have been suggested, none of which seem satisfactory. By some commentators it is supposed

that the words are disconnected portions of Cordelia's letter which Kent reads out; by others that Kent is too drowsy to follow out his train of thought, and that his sentences are consequently broken off: **All**, wholly; adverb: **o'er-watch'd**, worn out by want of sleep.

160, 1. **Take ... lodging**, take advantage of your weariness to shut out from your sight this scene of my disgrace.

162. **smile once more**, though frowning upon me now, once again look upon me with favour: **turn thy wheel**, *sc.* at the bottom of which I now am.

SCENE III.

1. **proclaim'd**, *sc.* as a criminal.

2, 3. **And by ... hunt**, and by fortunately being able to conceal myself in the hollow of a tree (*i.e.* in a tree hollowed by age) I escaped the search being made for me: **No port is free**, at every seaport a watch is set to take me.

3-5. **no place, ... taking**, there is no place which is not beset by those on the alert, with more than ordinary watchfulness, for my capture; **Does** because **guard ... vigilance** is a single idea.

5. **Whiles I may 'scape**, while there is yet the possibility of escape; **Whiles**, the old genitive of *while*, time, used adverbially.

6. **am bethought**, have resolved; elsewhere in Shakespeare always '*have* bethought.'

8, 9. **That ever ... beast**, that ever the extremest poverty wishing to degrade a man assimilated to the condition of a beast; "wishing to degrade a man" is Moberly's rendering; he compares Milton's "in spite of sorrow," = in order to spite sorrow.

10. **Blanket**, cover with nothing but a blanket: **elf ... knots**, mat and tangle my hair; as elves or fairies were supposed to do, especially in the case of horses; cp. *R. J.* i. 4. 90, "This is that very Mab That plats the manes of horses in the night, And bakes the *elf-locks* in foul sluttish hairs."

11. **with presented nakedness**, without any attempt to conceal my nakedness.

14. **Bedlam beggars**, see note on i. 2. 120.

15. **in**, into; Walker conjectures *Stick* for **Strike**: **mortified**, deadened, hardened into insensibility.

16. **wooden pricks**, skewers: "The *euonymus*, of which the best skewers are made, is called *prick-wood*" (Mason): **rosemary**,

an evergreen formerly very common in gardens; literally, 'the dew of the sea,' Lat. *ros marinus*.

17. **with ... object**, presenting this horrible appearance.

18. **pelting**, small, paltry; cp. *R. II.* ii. 1. 60, "Like to a tenement or *pelting* farm"; and in a figurative sense, *M. M.* ii. 2. 112, "every *pelting*, petty officer."

19. **lunatic bans**, wild curses; F. *ban*, proclamation, summons, proscription, etc., late Lat. *bannum*, proclamation commanding or forbidding under threat or penalty.

20. **Enforce their charity**, compel people to relieve their wants: **Turlygod**, supposed by some to be a corruption of *Turlupin*, a fraternity of naked beggars, which ran up and down Europe; and evidently a name, whencesoever derived, for such beggars as Edgar has just been describing: **Poor Tom**, see note on i. 2. 120.

21. **That 's something ... am**, that is something by which I may still call myself: with the name of Edgar I have done for ever; Ritson explains, "In assuming this character, I may preserve myself; as Edgar I am inevitably gone."

SCENE IV.

1. **so depart**, depart in this sudden and mysterious manner.

3. **The night before**, Clarke remarks, "This expression, introduced at this juncture, serves to denote that the morning is now well set in; ... and allows the progress of dramatic time to take place with sufficient rapidity for the spectators being beguiled into easy credence, when, at the close of the present long scene, Gloster says, 'The night comes on'; and Cornwall soon after observes, '"Tis a wild night.'"

4. **remove**, removal, departure; cp. *A. C.* i. 2. 203, "our pleasure ... requires Our quick *remove* from hence."

6. **Makest ... pastime?** do you regard such a disgrace as an amusement?

7. **cruel garters**, with a pun, common in old writers, upon *crewel*, worsted, out of which garters were sometimes made.

9, 10. **when a man 's ... nether-stocks**, when a man is found to be too free in the use of his legs (*sc.* in kicking), they put wooden stockings on him; **nether-stocks**, the old term for stockings in contrast with *upper-stocks*, *i.e.* breeches. "The clothing of the legs and lower part of the body formerly consisted of a single garment, called *hose* ... It was afterwards cut in two at the knees, leaving two pieces of dress, viz. knee-breeches, or, as they were then called, *upper-stocks*, ... and the *nether-stocks* or *stockings* ... In these terms the element *stock* is to be understood in the sense

of stump or trunk, the part of the body left when the limbs are cut off. In the same way G. *strumpf*, a stocking, properly signifies a stump" (Wedgwood).

11, 2. **What 's he ... here?** what manner of man is he that has so mistaken your position as to put you in these stocks? perhaps with a play on the word **place**; for the omission of *as* before **To**, see Abb. § 277.

23. **upon respect**, deliberately, advisedly, as Singer explains it. Wright quotes from *K. J.* iv. 2. 214, "To understand a law, to know the meaning Of dangerous majesty, when perchance it frowns More *upon humour than advised respect.*" The older commentators took **respect** to mean the reverence due to the king's messenger, and so Schmidt.

24-6. **Resolve me ... us**, explain to me in as few words as necessary how it was possible for you to deserve or for them to inflict such treatment, seeing that you were my messenger: **modest**, not excessive; not too great to make your narrative unintelligible.

27. **I did ... them**, I delivered your letters with all proper respect.

28, 9. **Ere I ... kneeling**, before I had risen from my knees on which I had gone to show my reverence: **a reeking post**, a messenger smoking with the haste he had made.

30. **Stew'd ... haste**, a mass of perspiration from the speed with which he had travelled.

32. **spite of intermission**, "though my business was thus interrupted and the answer delayed which I was to receive" (Schmidt); for **intermission**, in this sense, cp. *A. Y. L.* ii. 7. 32, "And I did laugh sans *intermission* An hour by his dial."

33. **presently**, at once, immediately: **on whose contents**, upon ascertaining the contents of those letters.

34. **their meiny**, their retinue; M. E. *meine*, a household: **straight took horse**, immediately mounted and rode away.

35, 6. **attend ... answer**, wait until they were at leisure to give me their answer.

37. **And meeting**, and I meeting; the omission of the nominative where there is no doubt what that nominative is, is frequent in Shakespeare, but very rare where the context, as here, might make it doubtful.

38. **had poison'd mine**, had by the tidings he brought destroyed all chance of my being well received.

40. **Display'd so saucily**, exhibited such insolence.

41. **more man than wit**, more valour than discretion; cp. i. *H. IV.* v. 1. 121, "The better part of valour is discretion."

42. **He raised ... cries**, his cowardly shrieks alarmed the household.

43. **found ... worth**, considered my offence deserving.

45. **Winter's ... way**, "if this be their behaviour, the king's troubles are not yet at an end" (Johnson).

47. **Do make ... blind**, *i.e.* their children are not over-anxious to take any notice of them.

48. **bear bags**, have full money-bags.

49. **Shall ... kind**, will be sure to find their children attentive to them.

50. **dolours**, for the quibble on *dollars*, cp. *Temp.* ii. 1. 18; *M. M.* i. 2. 50: **for**, on account of; see Abb. § 150.

51. **tell**, "count or recount, according to the sense in which 'dolours' is understood" (Wright).

52. **mother**, Percy remarks that the disease called the *mother* or *hysterica passio*, in Shakespeare's time was not thought peculiar to women only; and that the phrase here is derived from Harsnet's *Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures*, 1603, which furnishes the names of certain supposed fiends mentioned in iii. 4, below. In this pamphlet it is said, "Master Maynie had a spice of the *Hysterica passio*, as seems, from his youth, he himself termes it the *Moother*."

54. **Thy element's below**, your proper place is below.

57. **Made you ... of?** were you guilty of no greater offence than, etc.

59. **How chance**, how should it happen; Abbott (§ 37) thinks that "Shakespeare, perhaps, used *chance* as an adverb, but unconsciously retained the order of words which shows that, strictly speaking, it is to be considered as a verb."

63, 4. **We'll set ... winter**, "'Go to the ant, thou sluggard (says Solomon, *Proverbs*, vi. 6-8), learn her ways, and be wise; which having no guide, over-seer, or ruler, provideth the meat in the *summer*, and gathereth her food in the harvest'... If, says the Fool, you had been schooled by the ant, you would have known that the king's train, like that sagacious animal, prefer the summer of prosperity to the colder season of adversity"... (Malone). Schmidt points out that elsewhere Shakespeare uses to *set to school* for to *teach*.

64-6. **All that follow ... stinking**, "mankind, says the Fool, may be divided into those who can see and those who are blind. All men, but blind men, though they follow their noses, are led by their eyes; and this class of mankind *seeing* the king ruined, have all deserted him; with respect to the other class, the blind, who have nothing but their noses to guide them, they also fly

equally from a king whose fortunes are declining; for of the noses of twenty blind men there is not one but can smell him, who 'being muddied in fortune's mood, smells somewhat strongly of her displeasure' [*A. Y. L.* v. 2. 3]. You need not therefore be surprised at Lear's coming with so small a train" (Malone).

67, 8. **Let go ... following it**, cp. *Haml.* iii. 3. 15-22.

72. **That sir**, that man; frequently used by Shakespeare as a noun appellative; so *madams*, *H. V.* iii. 5. 28, "Our *madams* mock at us."

73. **but for form**, merely for appearance sake.

74. **pack**, hurry to desert you.

78, 9. **The ... knave, perdy**, the servant who deserts his master only becomes, shows himself to be, a fool in doing so; the Fool who stays with his master shows himself to be no rogue. Grant White points out that **knave** and **fool** are each of them used in two different senses in the two lines; **perdy**, F. *par dieu*, by God.

80. **Where ... fool**, here again, Kent uses **fool** in the sense of jester, while the fool in his reply uses it for a foolish person.

82. **Deny**, refuse; cp. *L. L. L.* v. 2. 228, "If you *deny* to dance, let 's hold more chat": **They are sick**? do they allege that they are sick?

83. **fetches**, excuses, pretences, shifts; the notion being that of going about to find something; cp. *Haml.* ii. 1. 38, "it is a *fetch* of wit."

84. **The images ... off**, the semblance of disobedience and rebellion; for **images**, cp. *K. J.* iv. 2. 71, "The *image* of a wicked heinous fault Lives in his eye"; Walker would here write *image*, the elided plural, for the metre's sake; for **flying off**, cp. *A. C.* ii. 2. 155, "and never *Fly off* our loves again!"

86. **fiery quality**, passionate disposition.

87, 8. **How ... course**, how utterly impossible it is to shake him when he has once determined upon a line of action.

92. **Inform'd them**! *i.e.* do you mean to say that that is all, that you did not bring back word from them that they would come at once?

96. **her service**, her attendance upon him.

97. **My breath and blood**! upon my life!

100, 1. **Infirmity ... bound**, when ill, men neglect those duties to which in sound health they recognize their obligation.

101, 3, **we are not ... body**, we are not our real selves when, being borne down by a weight of suffering, our nature compels the mind to act in sympathy with the body.

104, 6. **And am ... man**, and am angry with the hasty impulse which led me to regard what was evidently nothing more than the caprice of a sick man for the settled intention of one in sound health; **To take**, for taking; the indefinite infinitive: **Death on my state**! may I be accursed! an imprecation called forth by his eyes suddenly falling again upon Kent in the stocks. If **wherefore** belongs to this line, it must be accented on the latter syllable; Abbott (§ 490) would make **Death on my state**! a separate line, beginning the next line with *Wherefore*.

108. **remotion**, holding aloof from me, refusal to appear.

109. **practice**, stratagem, plot; cp. i. 2. 162: **Give ... forth**, release my servant, *i.e.* Kent.

111. **presently**, immediately.

113. **Till it ... death**, till its noise murders sleep; as in *Macb.* ii. 2. 36, though there it is by murdering the sleeping king.

114. **I would ... you**, I should be glad to see you on good terms with each other.

116. **cockney**, what the original meaning of this word was has not yet been discovered; (1) a young cock, (2) a cook, (3) an effeminate person, (4) a dweller in Cockayne, (5) a simpleton, have all been suggested; nowadays the term is applied to the lower class of Londoners.

117. **the paste**, the dough with which the pie-dish was lined: **knapped**, hit them a sounding blow; here, says Skeat, preserving the sense of Gael. *cnap*, to thump, strike, beat, a word imitative of sound.

117, 8. **coxcombs**, see note on i. 4. 91: **wantons**, impudent creatures.

121. **morrow**, morning; M. E. *morwe*, the termination *-we* being changed to *-ow*.

123. **what reason**, what good reason; *sc.* all his kindness to her.

125, 6. **I would ... adultress**, I should separate myself from my wife even in death, on the ground that she could not have been true to me in life; **Sepulchring**, accented on the second syllable, as in *T. G.* iv. 2. 118, "Or, at the least, in hers *sepulchre* thine"; **are you free**? they have released you, have they?

127. **Some ... that**, I will come to that matter later on.

128. **tied**, Sympson conjectures *tired*, in the sense of 'set to prey'; a word used figuratively in *Cymb.* iii. 4. 95-7, "I grieve myself To think, when thou shalt be disedged by her That now thou *tirest* on."

131. **quality**, manner, behaviour; cp. *M. V.* iii. 2. 6, "you know yourself, Hate counsels not in such a *quality*."

132. **take patience**, we still use take comfort, pleasure, pity,

pride, etc., in the sense of take into the mind, feel, though take patience, liking, sorrow, suspicion, unkindness, etc., found in Shakespeare, have fallen out of use.

132-4. **I have hope ... duty**, I hope it will prove that you are more incapable of properly appreciating her merits than she is capable of falling short in her duty; for a similar excess of negatives, cp. *W. T.* iii. 2. 54-7; *Cor.* i. 4. 14, 5; *Macb.* iii. 6. 8; *Cymb.* i. 4. 23.

136. **Would ... obligation**, would come short of her bounden duty; for **fail**, in the sense of neglect, omit, cp. *Macb.* iii. 6. 21, "for from broad words and 'cause he *failed* His presence at the tyrant's feast"; *Cymb.* iii. 4. 181, "I will never *fail* Beginning nor supplyment."

137. **She have**, *i.e.* as it is possible she may have done.

138. **to such ... end**, with such a good object, purpose.

141, 2. **Nature ... confine**, life in your case has so nearly reached its extreme limit; **confine**, accented on the latter syllable; not elsewhere used by Shakespeare with reference to time.

143. **some discretion**, some discreet person; abstract for concrete: **your state**, the weakness due to your age.

145. **make return**, merely a periphrasis for 'return'; as 'make retire,' 'make retreat,' 'make revolt,' etc., etc.

147. **becomes the house**, probably means, is suitable in me the head of the house.

149. **Age is unnecessary**, old people, like myself, are useless; Lear is using of himself the language which he supposes to express his daughter's feelings on the subject.

150. **vouchsafe**, deign to grant.

151. **these ... tricks**, such irony ill becomes you.

154. **struck ... tongue**, as though her cruel words were veritable blows.

156. **the stored vengeances**, cp. *Cor.* iv. 2. 11, "the hoarded plague o' the gods Requite your love!"; *R. III.* i. 3. 217-9, "If heaven have any grievous plague in store Exceeding those that I can wish upon thee, O, let them keep it till thy sins be ripe."

157. **top**, head: **young bones**, that this phrase was sometimes used for infants yet unborn, there is no doubt; but I cannot believe that such is the sense here; Lear is contrasting Goneril's youth with his own age, and calling down a curse upon that youth.

158. **taking**, malignant, bewitching; used of the malignant influence of superhuman powers, as in iii. 4. 58, below; *M. W.* iv. 4. 32, *Haml.* i. 1. 163.

160. **Infect her beauty**, by diseases which would make her a loathsome object.

161, 2. **drawn ... pride**, fogs sucked up from the fens or low, watery, grounds by the sun in order to fall upon her and blast her pride in her beauty. Most commentators follow Malone in taking **fall** as transitive, *i.e.* to cause her pride to fall; I agree with Wright that an intransitive sense is more in keeping with the context.

164. **When the ... on**, when you are seized with a fit of anger against me; **the** implies such a mood as being habitual to him.

166, 7. **Thy tender-hefted ... harshness**, it seems doubtful whether these words go with the line above or with those that follow, whether, that is, **shall ... harshness** means 'is certain not to abandon you to such harshness as your sister has shown,' or 'shall not give you over to be cursed by me as I have cursed your sister'; there is no other instance in Shakespeare of 'to give over *to*,' but in i. *H. IV.* iii. 3. 40, 1, "given over" seems to mean 'abandoned to vice,' "If thou wert any way given to virtue, I would swear by thy face; ... but thou art altogether *given over:* and wert indeed, but for the light in thy face, the son of utter darkness." Again, **tender-hefted** is a difficulty. A writer in the *Edin. Rev.* July 1869, says, "'Heft' is a well-known old English word for handle, that which holds or contains, and 'tender-hefted' is simply delicately-housed, daintily-bodied, finely-sheathed." On which Schmidt pertinently asks, "But is *haft* or *heft*, *i.e.* handle, indeed that which holds or contains, or not rather that by which a thing is held ... Perhaps 'tender-hefted,' *i.e.* tender-handled, is equivalent to tender, gentle, to touch or to approach; of an easy and winning address, affable." At all events, I cannot believe that there is here any reference to Regan's bodily-frame.

168. **in thee**, in your nature.

170. **bandy**, see note on i. 4. 92: **to scant my sizes**, to limit my allowances; "*size* is merely short for *assize*, M. E. *assise*, the usual old word for an allowance, or settled portion of bread, etc., doled out for a particular price, or given to a dependent. We even find it used, at a very early period, almost as a general word for provisions" ... (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*). The terms *sizes* and *sizings* are still in use at Cambridge, the poor scholar who receives them being a *sizar*.

173. **offices of nature**, duties which natural affection bids you render.

174. **Effects of courtesy**, workings of kindly feeling; cp. *Haml.* iii. 4. 129, "Lest with this piteous action you convert My stern *effects*."

176. **to the purpose**, come to the purpose; do not waste the time in these sentimental appeals.

STAGE DIRECTION. **Tucket**, see note on ii. 1. 79.

178. **approves her letter**, confirms what she said in her letter; cp. above, i. 1. 187, and *A. C.* i. 1. 60, "I am full sorry That he *approves* the common liar."

180. **easy-borrow'd pride**, Schmidt explains, "assumed with ease, counterfeited with an appearance of naturalness"; Moberly, "borrowed without the trouble of doing anything to justify it"; it seems to me from the context to mean pride that was readily assumed as a consequence of being employed by Goneril, but of which his dismissal, if in the fickleness of her favour she chose to dismiss him, would as readily strip him.

182. **varlet**, rascal; originally a young vassal, a youth, then a term of reproach; a later spelling of *vaslet*, a diminutive of *vassal*.

185, 6. **if your ... obedience**, if you in your kindly government of the world are well pleased with obedience; in this sense from Lat. *allaudare*, to highly approve of.

187. **Make it your cause**, espouse my wrongs as something touching yourselves: **send down**, *sc.* your messengers, agents.

188. **upon this beard**, upon me so venerable.

191, 2. **All 's not ... so**, it does not follow that what one so foolish and doting as you are terms offence, should be so in reality.

192, 3. **O sides, ... hold**, cp. *A. C.* iv. 14. 39-41, "O, cleave, my sides! Heart, once be stronger than thy continent, Crack thy frail case."

194. **disorders**, disorderly conduct; cp. *T. N.* ii. 3. 103, "though she harbours you as her kinsman, she 's nothing allied to your *disorders*."

195. **much less advancement**, said sneeringly, as though such a position were to such a one as Kent rather an honour than not.

196. **seem so**, acquiesce in being treated agreeably to your condition.

198. **will return**, are willing to return.

200. **from home**, away from home: **out ... provision**, without those means.

204. **To wage against**, to wage war against; not elsewhere in Shakespeare in this sense.

206. **Necessity's sharp pinch!** which (*sc.* **To wage ... owl,—**) is the cruel strait that the wretched are at times driven to. Furness accepts Collier's MS. Corrector's '*howl* Necessity's sharp pinch,' explaining, "roofs are to be abjured, storms braved, and famine howled forth among wolves." In the reading of all the folios and quartos, **owl**, there seems to him "a tameness out of

place at the close of Lear's wild outburst, which is thoroughly un-Shakespearian."

209. **To knee his throne**, to kneel at his throne: **squire-like**, as if I were a dependant; as the squire, literally shield-bearer, was of the knight. For the construction here, see Abb. § 417.

210. **afoot**, *i.e.* on foot, going.

211. **sumpter**, now used of a packhorse, "originally meant not the horse but the horse's driver ... from O. F. *sommetier*, a pack-horse's driver"... (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*); hence, as here, a drudge.

212. **At your choice**, as you please; the choice rests with you.

218. **needs**, of necessity; the old genitive used adverbially.

219. **plague-sore**, the "Lord's token" of *L. L. L.* v. 2. 423: **embossed**, rounded like a knob; in this sense from O. F. *embosser*, to swell or rise in bunches; in *A. W.* iii. 6. 107, "we have almost *embossed* him," from O. F. *embosquer*, to shroud in a wood: **carbuncle**, from Lat. *carbunculus*, a double diminutive of *carbo*, a coal, meaning (1) a small coal, (2) a gem, (3) an inflamed sore or boil, as here.

221. **call it**, invoke it.

223. **high-judging Jove**, Jove above, the supreme judge.

227. **I look'd ... yet**, I did not expect you for some time to come.

228. **For your fit welcome**, so as to give you a proper welcome.

229-31. **For those ... does**, for those who, like my sister, would temper your passion with reason, must be content to make allowances for you on the ground of your age, and so—but I need not say more, for she well knows what she is about; for **mingle**, cp. *Cymb.* ii. 4. 24, "their discipline, now *mingled* with their courages," *i.e.* their valour tempered by their discipline.

232. **avouch**, maintain; cp. *Macb.* iii. 1. 120, "and though I could With barefaced power sweep him from my sight And bid my will *avouch* it."

234. **sith**, see note on i. 1. 171; and for the conjunctional affix, Abb. § 287.

235. **Speak 'gainst**, are arguments against maintaining.

236. **Should**, can it possibly be that.

238. **receive attendance**, allow yourself to be waited on by.

240. **to slack you**, to show themselves remiss in their service.

241. **control**, rebuke; cp. *Temp.* i. 2. 439.

242. **spy**, perceive by looking more closely into the matter.

243, 4. **to no more ... notice**, no more will I admit into my castle or acknowledge as your attendants.

245. **in good time**, before it was too late; if you had retained it longer, you would have made a bad use of it.

246. **my guardians**, "the guardians under me of my realms" (Moberly): **my depositaries**, the trustees of my power.

247, 8. **But kept ... number**, made a reservation that I should be attended by a certain number; we should now say either 'made a reservation that,' or 'reserved the privilege that.'

249. **With ... twenty**, *i.e.* with no more than five and twenty.

252, 3. **not being ... praise**, to be not the worst is to have some place in the list of things praiseworthy; not a high place, but better than none at all.

254. **doth**, because **fifty** is taken as a concrete whole.

255. **And thou ... love**, and your love doubles hers.

256. **What need you**, apparently a confusion between 'what need have you,' and 'why do you need;' cp. *M. A.* i. 1. 318, "*What need* the bridge much broader than the flood?"

257. **To follow**, to attend upon you.

259. **O, reason ... need**, do not argue as to what is absolutely necessary.

260. **Are in ... superfluous**, have something or other which is not absolutely indispensable to them, however poor it may be.

261, 2. **Allow not ... beast's**, if you allow nature nothing more than is indispensable for its maintenance, there will be no difference in cost between the life of a man and that of a beast.

263. **If only ... warm**, if the mere warmth necessary to life were identical with splendour, why, nature has no need of such apparel as yours, which, splendid as it is, scarcely keeps you warm; *i.e.* if mere need is your criterion, such gorgeous clothes as you are wearing are at once condemned.

266. **You heavens, ... need**! while Capell considers the repetition of **patience** as 'energetical,' Malone and others believe it to be merely a printer's blunder; others would read 'give me patience:—patience I need!' or 'give me that patience *that* I need,' or 'give me *but* patience that I need,' or '*your* patience *that* I need'; which last seems to me the most satisfactory, if any change were necessary.

269. **you that stir**, for instances of the relative with a plural antecedent followed by a singular verb, see Abb. § 247.

271. **To bear**, as to bear; cp. i. 4. 36: **touch me**, inspire me; more commonly with some tender feeling.

272. **women's weapons**, cp. *H. V.* iv. 6. 31, 2, "And all my mother came into mine eyes And gave me up to tears"; *Haml.* iv. 7. 190, "when these are gone *The woman* will be out."

280. **flaws**, "this word, as Bailey observes, was 'especially applied to the breaking off of *shivers* or thin pieces from precious stones'" (Singer).

281. **Or ere**, a reduplication, both words being from A.S. *ær*, ere.

284. **well bestow'd**, properly accommodated, lodged.

285. **blame**, fault; that which deserves blame; cp. *A. W.* v. 3. 36, "My high-represented *blames*, Dear sovereign, pardon me": **put** ... **rest**, deprived him of ease and comfort; *i.e.* if he had stayed with Goneril, he would have been comfortable enough. The omission of the nominative is very common in Shakespeare with *has, is, was*, etc. Some editors follow the quartos and folios in making **blame** the nominative to **hath**.

286. **And must** ... **folly**, and must suffer the consequences of his folly.

287. **For his particular**, as regards himself individually: cp. *Cor.* iv. 7. 13, "Yet I wish, sir,—I mean for *your particular*,—you had not Join'd in commission with him."

288. **purposed**, determined.

290. **forth**, out of doors.

292. **He calls to horse**, he summons his attendants to mount and ride with him.

293. **to give him way**, to let him do as he pleases: **he leads himself**, he is not driven to act as he is doing, it is all his own perversity.

295. **Alack**, alas; probably, according to Skeat, from M. E. *lák*, loss, failure, and = ah, failure: ah, a loss.

296. **Do sorely ruffle**, are terribly boisterous; used figuratively in *T. A.* i. 1. 313, "To *ruffle* in the commonwealth of Rome": **about**, round about.

298. **procure**, are at pains to bring upon themselves; cp. *M. M.* v. 1. 479, "I am sorry that such sorrow I *procure*."

299. **Must** ... **schoolmasters**, must discipline them into patience.

301, 2. **And what** ... **fear**, and wisdom bids us fear the excesses which they may stir him up to commit, he being so ready to listen to evil advice; cp. *M. M.* v. 1. 139, "I have stood by, my lord, and I have heard Your royal *ear abused*," *i.e.* put to a bad use by being made to listen to falsehoods.

ACT III. SCENE I.

1. **Who 's there** ... **weather**, as though the weather were something animate.

2. **minded**, disposed, inclined.

5. **Bids**, *he* omitted, as in ii. 4. 285.

6. **main**, mainland; more generally of the ocean.

7. **That things ... cease**, so that everything in nature might change or altogether perish; cp. *Sonn.* xi. 7, "If all were minded so, the times should *cease*, And threescore year would make the world away."

8. **eyeless rage**, blind, undiscerning, fury.

9. **make nothing of**, treat with utmost irreverence.

10. **his ... man**, his microcosm, as the astrologers call it; man as containing in miniature the elements of the universe, the macrocosm.

12. **cub-drawn bear**, bear "with udders all drawn dry," as the lioness in *A. Y. L.* iv. 2. 115: **would couch**, would lie down in its lair.

13. **belly-pinched**, pinched as to its belly, *sc.* with hunger.

14. **unbonneted**, without hat; *bonnet* now used only of the head gear of women and Highlanders.

15. **And bids ... all**, and abandons himself to utter despair.

16. **labours to out-jest**, tries hard by his jests to make him forget.

17. **heart-struck**, whose blows have gone home to his heart; heart-felt.

18. **upon ... note**, trusting to my observation of you; cp. *W. T.* i. 1. 40, "it is a gentleman of the greatest promise that ever came into my *note*."

19. **Commend ... you**, entrust you with a secret of the greatest importance: **division**, enmity, disunion.

20. **the face**, the plain appearance.

22, 3. **as who ... high?** as all those have who by destiny have been placed in an exalted position: **who ... less**, for so they seem.

24. **speculations**, prying observers; abstract for concrete; cp. *K. J.* iv. 2. 116, "O, where hath our *intelligence* been drunk?" *i.e.* those sent to bring us intelligence, news.

25. **Intelligent ... state**, giving information of what goes on here; cp. below, iii. 5. 9, iii. 7. 11: **what ... seen**, *i.e.* relating what, etc.

26. **snuffs**, huffs, exhibitions of ill-temper; cp. i. *H. IV.* i. 3. 41, where there is a pun upon the word in this sense: **packings**, plots; cp. *T. S.* v. 1. 121, "Here 's *packing* with a vengeance to deceive us all."

27, 8. **Or the ... king**, or the cruel restraints which they have

put upon the kind-hearted old king; so "to give the rein," to leave without restraint, *Temp.* iv. 1. 52, "to take the rein," to go without restraint, *W. T.* ii. 3. 51.

29. **but furnishings**, the mere outward signs, appendages, not the things themselves; so *M. A.* i. 1. 288, "The body of your discourse is sometimes guarded (*i.e.* trimmed) with fragments." Wright points out that in Scotland the trimmings of a lady's dress are called 'furnishings.'

30. **a power**, a force; frequent in Shakespeare both singular and plural.

31. **scatter'd**, divided against itself; Hanmer proposes *shatter'd*: **who**, and they.

32. **Wise ... feet**, skilfully taking advantage of our negligence have secretly obtained a footing; cp. *Oth.* ii. 1. 76, "Whose *footing* (*i.e.* landing) here anticipates our thoughts."

33. **at point**, on the point; for the omission of the definite article in adverbial phrases, see Abb. § 90.

34. **To show ... banner**, to unfurl their banner in declaration of war.

35, 6. **If on ... Dover**, if you will venture to trust me so far as to hasten to Dover: **shall find**, will surely find.

37-9. **making ... plain**, when you shall give an accurate account of the maddening griefs which the unnatural behaviour of his children has brought down upon the head of their father.

41, 2. **And, from ... you**, and on the grounds of some information upon which I can safely rely, I propose this service to you.

43. **I will ... you**, a courteous way of showing hesitation about undertaking the mission: **No, do not**, there is no necessity for any hesitation on the subject, for I will give you good proof that you may trust me.

45. **my out-wall**, my exterior; what I seem to be, judging from the dress I have assumed; cp. *T. N.* i. 2. 48, "There is a fair behaviour in thee, captain; And though that nature with a beauteous *wall* Doth oft close in pollution, yet of thee I will believe thou hast a mind that suits With this thy fair and *outward character*"; *K. J.* iii. 3. 20, "within this *wall* of flesh There is a soul counts thee her creditor."

47. **As fear ... shall**, about which you need not have any doubt; **As** is what Ingleby, *Shakespeare, The Man and the Book*, Pt. i. p. 147, calls "the *conjunction of reminder*, being employed by Shakespeare and his contemporaries to introduce a subsidiary statement, qualifying, or even contradicting, what goes before, which the person addressed is required to take for granted, *e.g. A. Y. L.* iii. 5. 39, *M. M.* ii. 4. 89, *A. C.* i. 4. 22."

48. **fellow**, companion, associate.

49. **Fie on**, curses on!

52. **to effect**, in their consequence, object; Abbott (§ 186) points out that while motion 'with a view to,' 'for an end,' etc., expressed by *to* is still common before verbs, the Elizabethans used the preposition in this sense before nouns.

53, 4. **in which** ... **this**, in seeking to do which let your pains be taken by going in that direction, while I go in this: **lights on**, chances on, happens to meet.

55. **Holla the other**, let him shout to the other; **Holla**, according to Skeat, "not the same word as *halloo*, but somewhat differently used in old authors. The true sense is stop! wait! and it was at first used as an interjection simply, though easily confused with *halloo*, and thus acquiring the sense of to shout ... — F. *holà* ... — F. *ho*, interjection; and *là*, there" ...(*Ety. Dict.*).

SCENE II.

1. **crack your cheeks**, the winds being personified in classical poetry and represented in sculpture as winged beings.

2. **cataracts**, violent downpours of rain: **hurricanoes**, waterspouts; cp. *T. C.* v. 2. 172, "not the dreadful spout Which shipmen do the *hurricano* call."

3 **the cocks**, the weathercocks, erections on steeples, towers, houses, to show the direction of the wind, or weather; so called because often made in the form of a cock, the bird.

4. **thought-executing**, executing with the rapidity of thought; though, as Moberly says, "this idea seems rather to be involved in the compound than expressed by it; as 'thought-executing' must mean 'executing the thought of Him who casts you.'"

5. **Vaunt-couriers**, fore-runners, heralds; F. *avant*, before, from Lat. *ab*, from, and *ante*, before; cp. *Temp.* i. 2. 201, "Jove's lightnings, the precursors O' the dreadful thunderclaps."

7. **Smite** ... **world**! smite flat this thick round world!

8, 9. **Crack** ... **man**! crack the moulds in which nature shapes her products, and at one stroke destroy all the seeds from which ungrateful mankind are generated. Cp. *W. T.* iv. 4. 489, 90, "Let nature crush the sides o' the earth together And mar the seeds within"; and for **germens**, *Macb.* iv. 1. 59, "though the treasure Of nature's *germens* tumble all together."

10. **court holy-water**, an old proverbial phrase for fair words, flattery; that which at court was as precious as holy water in a church, cathedral, where among Catholics a small reservoir is kept in which the worshippers dip their fingers.

12. **pities**, *i.e.* that pities; for the omission of the relative, see Abb. § 244.

14. **Rumble thy bellyful**, growl to your heart's content; send forth all the wind in your belly.

15. **are my daughters**, *i.e.* and therefore I cannot complain of their treatment.

16. **tax**, accuse, blame for; a doublet of *task*.

17. **call'd you children**, *i.e.* by the endearing name of children.

18. **subscription**, submission, obedience; acknowledgment as shown by signing the name to a document.

19. **Your horrible pleasure**, whatever inflictions you are pleased to send down.

21. **But yet ... ministers**, but though I cannot charge you with ingratitude, I do accuse you of being mere slavish agents.

22. **That have**, for having.

23. **high-engender'd**, begotten in the skies.

26. **head-piece**, protection for his head, helmet; cp. *H. V.* iii. 7. 149, "if their heads had any intellectual armour (*i.e.* brains), they could never wear such heavy *head-pieces*"; and in a figurative sense, *W. T.* i. 2. 227, "some severals Of *head-piece* extraordinary."

28. **What he ... make**, *i.e.* hard; if a man suffers his toe to become as callous as it would be well for him to make his heart.

29, 30. **Shall ... wake**, is certain to find his sleep disturbed by the pain of the corn which will be the result of his allowing his toe to become hard: **of**, in consequence of.

31, 2. **made ... glass**, made grimaces in a looking-glass, turning and twisting her features to see which expression suited her best; used figuratively in *Haml.* iv. 4. 50, "*Makes mouths* at the invisible event," shows his contempt for.

37. **thing ... night**, even those creatures that prefer the night time.

39. **Gallow ... dark**, frighten even the wild animals that prowl about at night; **Gallow**, terrify; "Provincial English (Somersetshire) *gally*.—A.S. *gælwian*, in the compound *ágælwian*, to astonish" (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*).

40. **was man**, arrived at manhood (and could remember anything).

44. **affliction**, "for *infliction*; the two being then equivalent. Man's nature cannot endure the infliction, nor even the fear of it. So, in the Prayer Book, 'Defend us from all dangers and mischiefs, and from the fear of them'" (Hudson).

45. **pother**, turmoil, hurly-burly; cp. *Cor.* ii. 1. 234, "such a

pother As if that whatsoever god," etc. Steevens cites the word in its spelling *pudder*, which the folios give here, from Beaumont and Fletcher's *Scornful Lady*, ii. 2. 33, "Some fellows would have cried now, and have curs'd thee, And faln out with their meat, and kept a *pudder*."

47. **undivulged**, that have not yet come to light.

48. **Unwhipp'd of justice**, as yet unscourged by justice.

49. **simular ... virtue**, one who pretends to virtue; hypocrite; for other instances of this adjectival transposition, see Abb. § 419*a*.

50. **incestuous**, unchaste; Lat. *in-*, not, and *castus*, chaste: **caitiff**, see note on ii. 1. 63: **to pieces shake**, *i.e.* in your terror.

51, 2. **That under ... life**, who, under the disguise of specious friendship, a disguise suitable to their purpose, have laid plots against the lives of men; cp. *R. III.* iii. 5. 33, "he was the *covert'st shelter'd* traitor That ever lived": **close pent-up guilts**, crimes which have been closely shut up in men's bosoms.

53, 4. **Rive ... grace**, burst the breasts within which you are concealed and call aloud for mercy from these ministers of heaven who summon you to justice; for **continents**, = that which contains, holds, cp. *A. C.* iv. 14. 40, "Heart once be stronger than thy *continent*, Crack thy frail case."

56. **hard by**, close by: **hovel**, small hut.

57. **friendship**, friendly office, *i.e.* shelter.

58. **hard**, cruel.

60, 1. **Which, ... in**, to which only a few minutes ago I was refused admission when I made inquiries after you.

61, 2. **force ... courtesy**, compel them to show that courtesy of which they are so niggard.

65, 6. **The art ... precious**, our necessities have a strange art in that they are able to give a value to things that at other times would seem so worthless: **Come, your hovel**, come, show me this hovel you speak of.

67, 8. **I have one ... thee**, distracted as I am I still have room in my heart for pity for you.

69-72. **He that ... day**, apparently a part, though with variations, of the song at the end of *Twelfth Night*: **and**, probably nothing more than an addition for the sake of the metre; Abbott (§ 96) takes it as emphatic, = a little and *that* a very little; **Must make ... fit**, must shape his contentment to his condition, *i.e.* must adapt himself to his fortunes and be content with them.

75. **When priests ... matter**, when the sermons of priests are more full of words than of thought.

77. **When nobles ... tutors**, when noblemen take to teaching their tailors, instead of running deeply into debt with them.

Schmidt, with a literalness that can hardly be intended here, explains, "when nobles are the teachers of their tailors, and better understand the handicraft."

80. **nor no poor knight**, and when no knight is poor.

81. **live in tongues**, are actively circulated.

82. **throngs**, crowded assemblages, where they can ply their trade without fear of being detected.

86. **That going ... feet**, that men shall walk upon their feet.

87. **Merlin**, the soothsayer of the Arthurian legend, is mentioned again in i. *H. IV.* iii. 1. 150, "the dreamer *Merlin* and his prophecies": **before his time**, "as, according to the legend, King Lear was contemporary with Joash, King of Judah" (Moberly), *i.e. cir.* 841 B.C. Warburton, considering these lines to contain two distinct prophecies (1) "a satirical description of the present manners as future," (2) "a satirical description of future manners, which the corruption of the present would prevent from ever happening," placed ll. 85, 6, after l. 78, and was followed by Hanmer, Johnson, Jennens and Eccles. If it were worth while to make any transposition, it seems to me perfectly clear that ll. 85, 6 should come after l. 76. The first couplet speaks of things that are happening every day, and with those things **going ... feet** plainly corresponds. The remaining couplets deal with things that are never likely to happen, and correspond with that which the prophecy means never will happen, viz., that the realm of Albion should come to destruction. But with Grant White, Clarke, and others, I believe the whole prophecy to be an interpolation inserted by some actor to tickle the ears of the groundlings. Clarke well remarks, "The fact of the fool's present speech *after* Lear has left the stage, alone serves to condemn it as spurious: Shakespeare's fool utters his half-rambling, half-pertinent morsels for the sake of beguiling his old master's thoughts, and labouring to 'out-jest his heart-struck injuries'; he does not stay behind to jabber trumpery by himself, addressed solely to the rain and the wind." Moreover, the whole passage after the exit of Lear and Kent is found only in the folios, and ll. 75-86 are, besides, merely an amplification of a prophecy formerly, but wrongly, attributed to Chaucer.

SCENE III.

2. **When I ... him**, when I asked them to allow me to show the king some kindness; **pity**, by action, not by mere sympathy.

5. **sustain**, afford sustenance; as in i. 1. 124, i. 4. 320.

7. **Go to**, never mind.

9. **'tis dangerous to be spoken**, it is not safe to talk about it.

10. **closet**, private cabinet.

11. **home**, thoroughly: **power**, army.

12. **footed**, landed; see note on iii. 1. 32: **incline** ... **king**, show ourselves on the king's side, well disposed towards him.

13. **relieve him**, relieve his wants.

15. **I am ill**, you must say that I am ill.

15, 6. **as no less** ... **me**, and no less penalty is threatened me.

17. **toward**, about to happen; cp. *M. N. D.* iii. 1. 81, "a play *toward*"; *Haml.* v. 2. 376, and above, ii. 1. 10.

19. **forbid thee**, which has been forbidden you; which you have been forbidden to show; for the curtailed form, see Abb. § 343.

21, 2. **This seems** ... **all**, this betrayal of my father ought to be regarded as a piece of good service, and one sufficient to entitle me to that which will be taken from him, I mean everything he possesses.

SCENE IV.

1. **good my lord**, for the transposition of **my**, see Abb. § 13.

2, 3. **The tyranny** ... **endure**, exposure to a storm so fierce, enhanced as its terrors are by the black darkness of the night, is more than human nature can face.

4. **Wilt** ... **heart**? Steevens remarks, "I believe that Lear does not address this question to Kent, but to his own bosom. Perhaps, therefore, we should point the passage thus: 'Wilt break, my heart?' The tenderness of Kent induces him to reply, as to an interrogation that seemed to reflect on his own humanity."

6. **much**, something terrible.

11. **i' the mouth**, boldly facing him: **free**, unconcerned; cp. iv. 6. 80, below.

12. **delicate**, highly sensitive to annoyance.

14. **Save** ... **ingratitude**, except the pang that throbs there. Delius puts a semi-colon after **there**, taking **Filial ingratitude** as in apposition to **what beats there**.

16. **I will punish home**, the punishment I will inflict shall be thorough, adequate.

20. **frank**, open, generous, free.

21. **O, that** ... **lies**, but I must not let my thoughts dwell upon that, or it will drive me mad.

24, 5. **This tempest** ... **more**, this tempest diverts my thoughts from a subject far more harmful than anything external can be.

26. **You houseless poverty,**— you poor houseless wretch; abstract for concrete.

29. **That bide,** that have to endure without hope of shelter.

30. **unfed sides,** *i.e.* beneath which the ribs may be seen from want of food.

31. **Your loop'd ... raggedness,** your clothes hanging in holes and tatters.

32, 3. **O, I have ... this!** in the days of my power and prosperity I thought little about your condition: **physic,** the wholesome medicine of a like experience.

35. **That thou ... them,** so that you may be led to cast to them what is over and above your needs; **shake** seems to convey the idea of the crumbs scattered from the rich man's table.

46. **Through ... wind,** probably from some ballad.

47. **thy cold bed,** "the phrase *to go to a cold bed,* meant only *to go cold to bed;* to *rise from a naked bed* signified to *get up naked from bed,* and to say one *lay on a sick bed* (a form of expression far from uncommon even now) implied merely that he was *lying sick abed*" (Staunton).

53. **halters in his pew,** Delius suggests that this is to indicate that not even the most sacred places were exempt from the temptation to commit suicide. But **pew** was not always used for an enclosed seat in a church; Pepys, for instance, in his Diary for 15th and 17th February, 1669, employs the word for seats in a theatre; and the word literally means only an elevated place.

53, 4. **ratsbane ... porridge,** poison close to his dish of porridge; so that he might be tempted to put some into it; **ratsbane,** not any specific poison, but anything destructive to **rats, bane,** = harm, destruction, from A.S. *bana,* a murderer.

54, 5, **made him ... bridges,** *i.e.* stirred up his pride to make him run any wild risk; of course, the **four-inched bridges** are merely the exaggeration of pretended madness.

55, 6. **to course ... traitor,** to pursue his own shadow, taking it for a traitor. Theobald has shown that much of this pretended raving here and afterwards is taken from Harsnet's *Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures,* etc., with the confessions and examinations of the persons who pretended to be possessed with devils.

56. **five wits,** the five wits, so reckoned by analogy with the five senses, were common wit, imagination, fantasy, estimation and memory: **a-cold,** "*i.e. a*-kale, E. E., in a chill," Abb. § 24.

57. **O, do ... de,** supposed by Eccles to be "intended to express the sound of persons who shiver with extreme cold"; what we

call chattering of the teeth : **Bless thee from**, *i.e.* may God by his blessing protect you from.

58. **taking**, see note on ii. 4. 158.

59, 60. **there could** ... **there**, pretending that he sees the foul fiend, and that he is on the point of seizing him (the fiend).

63. **a blanket**, see above, ii. 3. 10.

65. **all the** ... **air**, cp. *Tim.* iv. 3. 108-10, "Be as a planetary plague, when Jove Will o'er some high-viced city hang his poison In the sick air"; Schmidt adds from *The Birth of Merlin*, formerly attributed to Shakespeare, "knowest thou what *pendulous* mischief roofs thy head?"

66. **Hang fated**, hang destined to fall.

69. **unkind**, unnatural; accented on the first syllable.

70, 1. **Is it** ... **flesh?** Delius refers this to the sticking of pins in the mortified bare arms, Clarke to the exposure of poor Tom's body to the storm; **discarded**, rejected, treated as worthless; a term at cards for getting rid of a worthless card when the player cannot follow suit, or wishes to take other cards into his hand.

72. **Judicious**, probably here, as in *Cor.* v. 6. 128, for *judicial*.

73. **pelican daughters**, Wright quotes *Batman vppon Bartlome*, "The Pellican loueth too much her children. For when the children bee haught, and begin to waxe hoare, they smite the mother and the father in the face, wherefore the mother smiteth them again and slaieth them. And the thirde daye the mother smiteth her selfe in her side that the bloud runneth out, and sheddeth that hot bloud vppon the bodies of her children. And by virtue of the bloud the birdes that were before dead, quicken againe."

74. **Pillicock**, Collier quotes Ritson's *Gammer Gurton's Garland*, "Pillycock, Pillycock sat on a hill; If he's not gone, he sits there still"; Dyce says the word was often used as a term of endearment.

78. **justly**, honestly, honourably.

78, 9. **set not** ... **array**, do not allow your affections to fix themselves upon gorgeous clothes; the expression seems equivalent to 'set not your heart sweetly upon.'

82. **wore gloves in my cap**, as emblems of my mistress' favour.

85. **light of ear**, ever ready to listen to any malevolent story.

86, 7. **hog in sloth** ... **prey**, Skeat, quoted by Wright, points out that in the *Ancren Riwle* the seven deadly sins are typified by seven wild animals; the lion being the type of pride, the serpent of envy, the unicorn of wrath, the bear of sloth, the

fox of covetousness, the swine of greediness, and the scorpion of lust.

87, 8. **Let not ... woman**, *i.e.* do not allow yourself to be fascinated by the charms of showily dressed women; do not show your emotion at the approach of flaunting women; **creaking**, perhaps with an allusion to the high-heeled shoes of the period.

88, 9. **keep ... books**, do not allow your name to find place in the ledgers of money-lenders.

91. **Says ... nonny**, Knight is inclined to think that some of these words are meant as an imitation of the sound of rushing wind. But in *Haml.* iv. 5. 161, we have "Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny," as the unmeaning burden of a ballad, and here Edgar is probably merely humming such a refrain.

92. **Dolphin my boy**, probably another snatch from a ballad: **sessa**, by some supposed to be the Spanish *cessa*, be quiet, or the Latin *cessa*, or the Italian *cessa*, or the French *cessez*, all with much the same sense. Dyce more plausibly suggests that the word is for *Sa, Sa*, exclamations of encouragement, and quotes Sylvester's *Du Bartas*, "*Sa, sa*, my Hearts! turn, turn again upon them, They are your own; now charge, and cheerly on them": **let him trot by**, Capell supposes that Edgar "feigns himself one who is surveying his horses, and marking their paces"; but it seems an utter waste of ingenuity to seek an explanation of what is meant for mere wild gabble.

93. **thou wert ... answer**, it would be better for you to be in your grave than to have to meet, face; for **thou wert better**, see Abb. § 230.

95, 6. **Thou owest ... silk**, you have not to thank the silkworm for your dress.

97. **cat**, civet-cat, the perfume from which was much used in those days: **sophisticated**, cunningly made to appear other than we really are, *i.e.* by our bodies being covered by clothes.

98. **unaccommodated**, unprovided with clothes. Wright thinks from the word 'lendings' here that 'accommodate' had even in Shakespeare's day acquired the modern sense of 'to furnish with money'; and in Fletcher's *Queen of Corinth*, iv. 1, we have to "accommodate money."

101, 2. **'tis ... in**, this is not the sort of night one would choose for taking a bath, *i.e.* in the rain which is pouring down.

102. **Look ... fire**, referring to Gloucester now approaching with a torch.

103. **Flibbertigibbet**, one of the fiends mentioned, among other places, in Harsnet's *Declaration*, etc.

104. **walks ... cock**, continues his wanderings on earth till the first crow of the cock, *i.e.* till early dawn ; **walks**, as frequently in Shakespeare, the technical term applied to the appearance of spectres, ghosts, etc. For the effect of the crowing of the cock upon spirits, cp. *Haml.* i. 1. 150-61.

104, 5. **the web and the pin**, called in *W. T.* i. 2. 291, "the pin and web," one of the popular names for a cataract, a film growing over the eye-ball ; another name for the disease was "a pearl in the eye," *e.g.* Middleton, *The Spanish Gipsy*, ii. 1. 166, "A pearl in the eye ! I thank you for that ; do you wish me blind ?"

105. **squints the eye**, causes a squint in the eye : **hare-lip**, lip divided in the middle, and thought to resemble the lip of a hare ; cp. *M. N. D.* v. 1. 418, "Never mole, *hare-lip*, nor scar, Nor mark prodigious, ... Shall upon their children be." This defect in children was greatly dreaded, and various charms were used for its prevention.

105, 6. **mildews the white wheat**, blights the wheat ; the substantive *mildew* is the A.S. *meledeaw*, honey-dew, probably, says Skeat, "from the sticky honey-like appearance of some kinds of blight, as *e.g.* on lime-trees" ; whether **white** means here the white variety of wheat as opposed to the red, or is used proleptically for 'makes it white with mildew,' is perhaps doubtful.

106. **the poor ... earth**, the worm. .

107. **S. Withold**, *i.e.* Saint Withold, supposed by Tyrwhitt to be for Saint Vitalis, who, it appears, was commonly invoked against the night-mare : **old**, *i.e.* wold, plain open country.

108. **night-mare**, an incubus ; to whose agency horrible dreams, accompanied by pressure on the breast, were due ; the element **-mare**, says Skeat, is from the root *mar*, to pound, crush : **her nine-fold**, apparently her brood of nine (familiars) ; cp. the "nine farrow" of the sow, *Macb.* iv. 1. 65.

110. **her troth plight**, pledge her faith ; probably that she would work no more mischief.

111. **aroint**, avoid, begone ; of the many derivations suggested for this word, the most probable seems to be that it is another form of the E. E. verb *arunte*, avoid, of which *rynt*, quoted in Boucher's *Glossary of Arch. and Prov. Words* as in use in Cheshire, would be a contraction.

117. **wall-newt**, *newt* is properly (*a*)*n ewt*, a contraction of *euete*, A.S. *efeta*, a lizard ; words similarly formed by the adjunction of the *n* of the indefinite article are *nick-name*, an eke-name, *nugget*, formerly *niggot* = *ningot* for *an ingot*, *nuncle* for *mine uncle* : **and the water**, *i.e.* water-newt.

119. **sallets**, salads ; F. *salade*, O. Ital. *salata*, "feminine of

salato, ... pickled, salted" ... (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*): **ditch-dog**, dog found lying dead in a ditch.

120. **green ... pool**, the scum, duck-weed, on the surface of stagnant pools.

121. **tithing**, district; properly a district containing ten families; **stock-punished**, see note on ii. 2. 114.

124. **deer**, game, *sc.* to him.

126. **my follower**, his attendant devil: **Smulkin, Modo**, and **Mahu**, all names of fiends in Harsnet's *Declaration*, etc.

128. **a gentleman**, in pretended anger at Gloucester's question in the previous line.

130. **Our flesh and blood**, our children.

133, 4. **my duty ... commands**, my duty cannot bring itself to obey in all respects the harsh commands of your daughters.

136. **take ... you**, do what it likes with you.

139. **this philosopher**, this stoic in caring nothing for external annoyance.

142. **Theban**, probably an allusion to the fact that Thebes was the first place in Western Europe into which the use of letters was introduced from Phœnicia.

143. **What is your study?** what is the problem engaging your mind?

144. **to prevent**, to be beforehand with and so to frustrate.

147. **Canst ... him?** can you wonder at it?

152. **Now ... blood**, whom I have now disinherited and disowned as my son.

156. **cry you mercy**, I ask your pardon; excuse me; said in refusal to leave the company of his "philosopher" to go with Gloucester.

162. **let him ... fellow**, *i.e.* do not try to separate him from Poor Tom, but let him accompany the king to the shelter you have provided for him.

163. **Take ... on**, lead the way with him, and the king will follow.

165. **Athenian**, to his "philosopher"; Athens being the chief seat of learning in Greece.

167. **Child**, Warburton says that in the old times of chivalry the noble youth who were candidates for knighthood, during the time of their probation, were called *Infans*, *Varlets*, *Damoysels*, *Bacheliers*. The most noble of the youth were particularly called *Infans*. It is doubtful whether Edgar's words are a quotation from one or more ballads.

168, 9. **His word** ... **man**, Halliwell says this distich is probably from some early version of the tale of *Jack and the Giants*, in which we have "an Englishman" for **a British man**. The change, Ritson thinks, is because the scene of the play "is laid long before the English had anything to do with this country"; according to Wright, "the substitution points to the time when, under James I., the name of England was merged in the more general title of Great Britain." Possibly it is a mere accident.

SCENE V.

1. **my revenge**, *i.e.* upon Gloucester for having disobeyed him in helping the king.

2, 3. **How, my lord, ... of**, what opinion the world may have of me for allowing my feelings of loyalty to you to overcome those of love to my father, is a màtter I am somewhat afraid to think of; **censure**, both verb and noun, formerly had a neutral sense, and here it is only the word **fears** which shows that Edgar anticipated an unfavourable opinion; **something fears me** is probably impersonal, it somewhat frightens me.

4-6. **I now** ... **himself**, I now see from this proof of your loyalty that it was not merely your brother's naturally evil disposition that made him seek to take his father's life, but a worthiness on your part, made more active by your horror of his badness, which urged him on to his fatal determination; *i.e.* if he had not been provoked by the manifestation of your goodness, so greatly in contrast to his own evil nature, that evil nature would not have been enough in itself to make him resolve upon his father's death. Edmund's merit is regarded as stimulated into fuller activity by the evidence of Edgar's evil disposition, and this evil disposition as, in its turn, goaded on to desperate crime by the conspicuous superiority of his illegitimate brother's superiority of character. For **a-work**, see Abb. § 24.

7, 8. **How malicious** ... **just**! how cruelly unjust fortune is to me in that it makes me repent of behaving honourably! **approves**, proves.

9. **an intelligent** ... **France**, one who was aware of, and collusive to, the advantages which France has gained, *i.e.* the landing of the French army on our coasts. It is perhaps doubtful whether this is a case of transposition of the adjective, as in iii. 2. 49, "thou simular man of virtue," *i.e.* thou man simular of, pretending to, virtue, or whether **to** depends upon **party**.

10. **that this** ... **detector**! would to heaven that this treason had never been perpetrated, or that, if perpetrated, I had never been fated to be its discoverer!

12, 3. **you have ... hand**, the business before you is one that will call for the exercise of all your skill and energy.

15, 6. **ready ... apprehension**, at hand for me to seize him.

17. **comforting**, giving assistance to. "The indictment against an accessary after the fact, for treason, charges that the accessary 'comforted' the principal traitor after knowledge of the treason" (Lord Campbell, *Shakespeare's Legal Acquirements*, p. 82).

18. **stuff ... fully**, greatly confirm his suspicion.

19, 20. **my blood**, my natural feelings as his son.

21, 2. **a dearer ... love**, one who will show you more real love than your father has ever shown.

SCENE VI.

1, 2. **take it thankfully**, make the best of the change.

4. **have**, a confusion of proximity, due to the plural **wits**.

5. **impatience**, inability to endure his sufferings.

6. **Frateretto**, another of the devils mentioned in Harsnet's *Declaration*, etc.

6, 7. **Nero ... darkness**, Upton remarks that in Rabelais Nero is a fiddler, and Trajan an angler, "but players and editors, not willing that so good a prince as Trajan should have such a vile employment, substituted Nero in his room, without any sense or allusion at all"; he would therefore alter **Nero** into *Trajan*: **innocent**, addressed to the Fool; that being a term of common application.

12. **to his son**, for his son. It has been supposed that there is an allusion here to Shakespeare's having, shortly before *Lear* was written, obtained from the Herald's College a coat-of-arms in his father's name; but this seems extremely improbable.

15, 6. **To have ... 'em**, an anticipation of his daughter's punishment in hell.

19. **health**, Johnson explains that a horse is above all other animals subject to disease. Others would read *heels*, in reference to the proverb "Trust not a horse's *heel* nor a dog's tooth," and the Latin "In fide, dente, pede, mulieris, equi, canis, est fraus," *i.e.* there is no trusting the faith of a woman, the tooth of a dog, or the heels of a horse.

20. **straight**, straightway, immediately.

21. **justicer**, "the most ancient law-books have *justicers* of the peace as frequently as *justices* of the peace" (Reed).

22. **she foxes**, Schmidt here, and in iii. 7. 28, takes **foxes** as

emblems of ingratitude; but the ordinary idea of cunning seems sufficient to the sense.

24. **Wantest ... madam?** Look where the fiend stands and glares! Do you want eyes to gaze at and admire you during your trial, madam? The fiends are there to serve your purpose" (Clarke). Seward proposed *Wanton'st;* Staunton, *Wantonizeth thou* at, etc.

25. **bourn,** brook; the line is from an old ballad.

27. **speak,** say.

29, 30. **in the ... nightingale,** assuming the voice of a nightingale: **white herring,** fresh herring; with their silvery scales, as contrasted with the *bloater,* the herring when smoked or pickled.

32. **Stand ... amazed,** do not look so terror-stricken.

36. **yoke-fellow,** associate; cp. *H. V.* ii. 3. 56, "*Yoke-fellows* in arms"; iv. 6. 9, "*Yoke-fellow* to his honour-owing wounds."

37. **Bench ... side,** take your seat on the bench beside him: **o' the commission,** one of those appointed to try them.

40-3. **Sleepest ... harm,** probably from some pastoral ballad; **minikin,** dear little; originally a substantive = little darling.

50. **Cry you ... joint-stool,** I beg your pardon, I mistook you for a piece of furniture; an old proverbial saying which was perhaps intended, as Nares suggests, "as a ridiculous instance of making an offence worse by a foolish and improbable apology."

51. **warp'd,** wry, cross; literally *twisted.*

52. **store,** material; Jennens conjectures *stuff.*

53. **Corruption ... place!** what, are even her judges corrupt? has corruption, bribery, found its way to the seat of judgement?

57. **That you ... retain,** that you have so often made a boast of retaining; **to retain,** the infinitive used indefinitely.

58, 9. **My tears ... counterfeiting,** my sympathy with him is so intense that my tears will prevent my keeping up my part.

67. **lym,** Cotgrave explains *limier* as 'a Bloud hound, or *Lime*-hound'; the derivation is unknown, though some connect it with *lyam* or *leam,* the string by which a hound was led.

68. **bobtail,** short-tailed: **tike,** a rough-haired dog; used as a term of contempt in *H. V.* ii. 1. 31, "Base *tike,* call'st thou me host?" as at the present day provincially, especially in Yorkshire: **trundle-tail,** curly-tailed dog; **trundle,** = to wheel, roll, twist.

71. **leap the hatch,** leap over the half-door.

72. **Sessa,** see quotation from Dyce on iii. 4. 94: **wakes,** originally festivals held on the anniversary of the dedication of a

church, then festivals generally, especially those in country villages; cp. *W. T.* iv. 3. 109, "he haunts *wakes*, fairs, and bear-baitings."

73. **thy horn is dry**, though these Toms o' Bedlam carried a horn which they sounded when asking for alms and also used for holding the liquor given to them, Steevens is probably right in supposing that Edgar here means that he cannot longer keep up the part he has been playing.

74. **anatomize**, dissect: **what breeds**, what growth there can be.

76. **entertain**, engage; cp. *Cymb.* iv. 2. 394, "I'll weep and sigh; And leaving so his service, follow you, So please you *entertain* me"; and the substantive, *entertainment*, *A. W.* iv. 1. 17.

78. **Persian**, *i.e.* magnificent. Moberly thinks there may be an allusion to a Persian embassy to England early in James I. reign.

83. **at noon**, Clarke remarks, "This speech is greatly significant, though apparently so trivial. It seems but a playful rejoinder to his poor old royal master's witless words of exhaustion, but it is, in fact, a dismissal of himself from the scene of the tragedy and from his own short day of life. The dramatist indeed has added one slight passing touch of tender mention (Kent's saying, 'Come, help to bear thy master; thou must not stay behind') ere he withdraws him from the drama altogether; but he seems by this last speech to let us know that the gentle-hearted fellow who 'much pined away' at Cordelia's going into France, and who has since been subjected to still severer fret at his dear master's miseries, has sunk beneath the accumulated burden, and has gone to his eternal rest even in the very 'noon' of his existence."

87. **upon him**, laid against him.

89. **drive**, litters in former days were drawn by horses as well as borne by men; cp. *K. J.* v. 3. 16.

91. **dally**, waste time, trifle.

92. **offer**, attempt, undertake; cp. *M. V.* i. 2. 99, "If he should *offer* to choose"; *M. N. D.* iv. 1. 216, "if he will *offer* to say what methought I had."

93. **Stand ... loss**, are assuredly lost; Delius compares *Oth.* ii. 1. 51, "Therefore my hopes, not surfeited to death, *Stand in bold cure*," and l. 98, below.

94, 5. **that will ... conduct**, who will quickly lead you where you may make arrangement for your journey; cp. i. 1. 164. Schmidt takes **provision** here as = store of money: **Oppressed**, worn out.

96. **This rest ... sinews**, this rest might have soothed and healed your shattered nerves; Shakespeare seems to have always

used *nerve* for *sinew*, e.g. *Haml.* i. 4. 82, "And makes each petty artery in this body As hardy as the Nemean lion's *nerve*," and here apparently he employs **sinews** for *nerves*, *i.e.* fibres conveying sensation.

97, 8. **Which**, ... **cure**, and they (*sc.* the shattered nerves), if the exigency of the time will not allow of your taking such repose, have little hope of being repaired.

99. **Thou** ... **behind**, you must not be left behind.

100. **our woes**, woes like our own.

102. **alone**, without any one to share his sorrows.

103. **Leaving** ... **behind**, losing all remembrance of circumstances in which his mind was untroubled and in the enjoyment of happy scenes; for **free**, = unconcerned, careless, cp. above, iii. 4. 11.

104. **sufferance**, suffering, troubles: **o'erskip**, lightly pass over.

105. **bearing**, suffering; a substantive.

106. **portable**, endurable; cp. *Mach.* iv. 3. 89, "all these are *portable* With other graces weigh'd."

107. **bend** ... **bow**, the latter word expressing more intense suffering than the former.

108. **He** ... **father'd**, his children treating him as unnaturally as my father has treated me.

109-11. **Mark** ... **thee**, "attend to the great events that are approaching, and make thyself known when that 'false opinion' now prevailing against thee shall, in consequence of 'just proof' of thy integrity, revoke its erroneous sentence, and recall thee to honour and reconciliation" (Johnson).

112. **What** ... **king**! whatever else may happen to-night to me and others, may the king safely make his escape.

113. **Lurk, lurk**, I must hide myself. This passage, ll. 100-13, is omitted in the folio, and the Camb. Edd. think internal evidence is conclusive against its being written by Shakespeare. Delius defends the genuineness: "We readily admit," he says, "that the style is not that of the rest of the drama; but this difference may be explained in two ways, partly by the form, and partly by the matter. Shakspere is fond of introducing such rhyming lines, formed of a number of pointed, epigrammatic, antithetic sentences. They stand out from the surrounding blank verse, and point the moral of the preceding situation, and the actions of the various characters. The second explanation is, that the poet lays great stress on the parallelism existing between Lear and Gloucester, and takes this opportunity of impressing it again upon his audience. A mere interpolator would hardly have known of this peculiar tendency of the poet, or have carried it

out so thoroughly, and in so pregnant a manner, as in the few but thoroughly Shaksperian words: 'He childed as I father'd'" (New Sh. Soc. Trans. for 1875-6, p. 143). These arguments are not to me convincing. The passage comes upon one like a sudden gust of icy wind in warm weather. The language does not sound to me Shakespearean; I remember no play in which, in the midst of such intensely tragic interest, any similar moralizing intrudes itself; the progress of the action is not in any way furthered; while as to the parallelism between the families of Lear and Gloucester, it was not in Shakespeare's way to write under a picture 'This is a house.'

SCENE VII.

6. **Leave ... displeasure**, leave him to be dealt with as my anger shall prompt me; that will be sufficiently severe, you may be certain.

9. **where you are going**, to whom I am sending you: **festinate**, speedy.

10. **bound**, Delius points out that the word here does not mean *obliged*, but *ready, prepared*, as in *Haml.* i. 5. 6, "Speak, I am *bound* to hear"; in this sense from M. E. *boun*, ready to go, with excrescent *d*, from Icel. *búinn*, prepared, ready.

10, 1. **Our posts ... us**, the messengers between us shall carry full and speedy intelligence of events; cp. above, iii. 1. 25.

16. **Hot questrists after him**, eagerly seeking for him; **questrists**, no doubt a word of Shakespeare's coinage: **at gate**, Furness prints **at** with a mark of elision, considering the definite article to be absorbed.

17. **lords dependants**, apparently lords dependant upon the king, though who these lords could be it is difficult to say. Furness follows Pope in reading *lord's, i.e.* Gloucester's.

22. **Pinion him**, tie his hands behind his back; as the pinions of a bird are secured to prevent its flying.

23-6. **Though well ... control**, though it may not be justifiable for me to condemn him to death without allowing him the formality of a trial, yet for the occasion my wrath shall over-rule the powers which properly belong to me in a way which men may blame but will not be able to hinder; for **do a courtesy**, = bow before, obey, cp. *M. M.* ii. 4. 175, "Bidding the law *do court'sy*, to their will"; and compare Macbeth's hesitation to act in a similar manner, *Macb.* ii. 1. 118-20, "and though I could With barefaced power sweep him from my sight And bid my will avouch it, yet I must not"; **control**, the substantive is from the

O. F. *contre-rôle*, a duplicate register which verified and so *checked* the original roll.

28. **corky**, withered, like the bark of the cork tree.

32. **as you are**, that you are.

36. **So white ... traitor**, to think that one so aged as you are should be a traitor! **Naughty**, wicked, cruel; used in a much stronger sense than at present, the word now being generally reserved for fractious children.

39. **my hospitable favours**, the features of one who has received you with such hospitality; *favour*, for look, appearance, is very frequent in Shakespeare, and in i. *H. IV.* iii. 2. 136, we have it in the plural for *features*, as here, "When I will wear a garment all of blood And stain my *favours* in a bloody mask."

40. **ruffle**, disorder.

42. **Be simple answerer**, do not attempt to prevaricate.

43 **confederacy**, conspiracy; generally in Shakespeare, as here, in a bad sense; and so the substantive, *confederate*.

44. **footed**, landed; cp. above, iii. 3. 12.

47. **guessingly set down**, the contents of which are but guesses at facts.

53. **I am tied ... course**, like a bear, I am tied to the stake and must endure the attack made upon me. In bear-baiting, the bear was tied to a stake and *coursed*, *i.e.* attacked by relays of dogs; cp. *Macb.* v. 7. 1, 2, "They have *tied* me to a *stake*; I cannot fly, But, bear-like, I must fight the *course*": Brome, *The Antipodes*, 1638, "Also you shall see two ten-dog *courses* at the great bear," *i.e.* two attacks, each made by ten dogs.

57. **anointed**, kings being called 'the Lord's anointed,' *i.e.* consecrated with holy oil as his vice-gerents on earth: for **stick**, the quartos give *rash*, an old technical term for the oblique stroke of the boar's tusks. In a note on Ben Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour*, iv. 4, Gifford says that Shakespeare "properly" altered the word to **stick**; the latter word is no doubt more appropriate to a woman's teeth, but the force of the metaphor seems impaired by the change; **fangs**, not now used of a boar's tusks, in fact confined almost entirely to a snake's teeth.

60. **the stelled fires**, the stars; Lat. *stella*, a star.

61. **holp**, Shakespeare uses *helped* twice only, *R. III.* v. 3. 167, *Oth.* ii. 1. 138.

62. **that stern time**, at such a cruel, bitter, time. Steevens compares Chapman's *Homer*, xxiv., "In this so *sterne a time* Of night and danger."

63. **turn the key**, *i.e.* unlock the door.

64. **All cruelties else subscribed**, though acknowledging, confessing to, any other acts of cruelty, however great; for **subscribed**, cp. *A. W.* v. 3. 96, "but when I had *subscribed* To mine own fortune and inform'd her fully," *i.e.* confessed to her how my affairs stood, what my position was. The quartos and folios give 'All *cruels* else,' which Clarke, Abbott, and Wright explain as = cruelties, Abbott paraphrasing "All cruel acts to the contrary being yielded up, forgiven," or "all other cruel animals being allowed entrance." Schmidt has, I think, shown that if *cruels* be the genuine reading, it can only mean 'cruel creatures,' the abstract idea being inadmissible, and for Abbott's rendering with that sense, "being allowed entrance," no parallel passage is to be found in Shakespeare. Crosby paraphrases, "All thy *feelings*, no matter how cruel or inhuman 'else,' *i.e. at any other time*, or under any other circumstances, having 'subscribed,' *i.e. succumbed* to the terrors of that storm, and *yielded* to the pity for the old king, thy father." Furness, who adopts the reading of the folios, 'subscribe,' and continues the inverted commas to that word, explains, "Thou shouldst have said: Good porter, open the gates, acknowledge the claims of all creatures, however cruel they may be at other times; or perhaps: open the gates; give up all cruel things else, *i.e.* forget that they are cruel." I have ventured to read **cruelties**, believing that the transcriber's or compositor's eye was caught by the first three letters of the word '*else*' immediately following, with the result that **cruelties** was shortened into *cruels*. In *Cor.* v. 2. 17, the folios give "For I have *ever ver*ified my friends," a mistake, I believe, for 'ever *magnified*' (as Hanmer conjectured) due to the final syllable of 'ever' being run on into the next word. The sense of the present passage, then, I take to be, 'though you might put your hand to, acknowledge as your own, any other inhuman acts, you would scarcely have shown yourself so inhuman as to bolt the door to wild animals in such a terrible night.'

65. **The winged vengeance**, the swift vengeance of the gods which always overtakes cruelty; for **The**, denoting notoriety, see Abb. § 92.

66. **See**, emphatic; hear of it you may, but you shall never witness it.

68. **He that will think**, he who desires to imagine; not merely 'he who thinks.'

70. **One side ... too**, if I leave one of your eyes in its socket, one side of the face (*i.e.* the side which has an eye) will jeer at the other for being without one; therefore I will pluck out the other also; for **another**, = the other, cp. *W. T.* iv. 4. 176, "I think there is not half a kiss to choose Who loves *another* best"; and see Abb. § 88.

75, 6. **If you ... quarrel**, if you were a man, I would provoke you to combat on such a good excuse for fighting. Delius takes **quarrel** as referring to her calling him "dog"; it seems to me to refer to the cruelties to which Regan was a party.

77. **villain**, bondman, servant; do *you*, my slave, dare to challenge my actions?

78. **come on**, face me in combat: **the chance of anger**, what you may chance to meet with from a man so justly angry as I am.

82. **Lest ... it**, that it may not see more, let me be beforehand with it by plucking it out.

85. **all ... nature**, every spark of natural feeling for your father.

86. **To quit**, to requite; *quit*, adjective, from which the verb comes, meant 'freed,' 'released,' 'set at rest,' from Lat. *quietus*, quiet.

88. **That made ... us**, that revealed, opened out, to us your treasons; cp. *W. T.* ii. 1. 172, "I wish, my liege, You had only in your silent judgement heard it, Without more *overture*," *i.e.* without disclosing more to me.

90. **abused**, unjustly treated by me.

93. **how look you?** apparently, why do you look in that strange way?

96. **apace**, fast; literally 'on pace.'

97. **Untimely ... hurt**, this wound comes at an unfortunate moment.

101. **the old ... death**, a natural death.

103. **the Bedlam**, the lunatic, *sc.* Edgar.

104. **where he would**, where he may wish to go.

104, 5. **his roguish ... thing**, he in his vagabond lunacy accommodates himself to anything, is quite ready to go anywhere.

106. **some flax ... eggs**, a common remedy in former days for bleeding wounds.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

1, 2. **Yet better ... flatter'd**, bad as my condition is, it is better to be thus and conscious of being despised, than to be flattered while all the time being despised by those who flatter.

2-4. **To be worst ... fear**, to be at the very lowest point of fortune's wheel is still to have hope and to be free from fear; **dejected ... fortune**, "that is, thing dejected by fortune" (Wright); for other instances of this transposition, see Abb. § 419 *a*.

5, 6. **The lamentable ... laughter**, the change to be grieved at is that from a happy to an unhappy state; from an unhappy state when any change takes place, the return is to joy.

9. **Owes ... blasts**, cannot be called upon to repay them by gratitude.

12. **Life ... age**, life would never reconcile itself to old age and death. "These are the things that make death terrible," said Johnson, when shown by Garrick over his handsome house.

13. **tenant**, Clarke supposes the old man to be "the occupant of the farm-house in which Gloucester placed Lear for shelter, and that the servants who propose to 'get the Bedlam to lead the old earl,' not finding the supposed beggar, have left the blind nobleman in charge of his faithful tenant."

16. **Thy comforts**, the assistance you offer me.

17. **may hurt**, *i.e.* if his help comes to the knowledge of Cornwall.

20. **I stumbled ... saw**, when I had eyes, I walked blindly into trouble.

20-2. **full oft ... commodities**, it is a thing of common experience that the advantages we enjoy make us careless (and so bring us into trouble), while our absolute wants turn out to be the greatest advantages (by keeping us from rashness and its consequent trouble); for **secure**, in this sense, cp. *Tim.* ii. 2. 184, "Canst thou the conscience lack To think I shall lack friends? *Secure* thy heart," *i.e.* be easy on that score; *Oth.* i. 3. 10, "I do not so *secure* me in the error," *i.e.* the fact that there is this discrepancy in the numbers does not set my heart at ease.

23. **The food ... wrath**! the subject of your deceived father's anger; that on which your father's anger nourished itself; **abused**, = deceived, misled, is frequent in Shakespeare, *e.g.* *M. A.* v. 2. 100, *Cymb.* i. 6. 131.

24. **see ... touch**, recognize you by my touch, now that I have no eyes to see.

26. **Who is 't ... worst'**? *i.e.* as I presumptuously did just now.

30. **So long ... worst**, "if we could truly say 'this is the worst,' our capacities for suffering would be finite; but this is not so, there is always 'in lowest depth a lower deep' of possible suffering" (Moberly).

33. **He has some reason**, *i.e.* is not wholly 'madman.'

34. **a worm**, no better than the worm beneath the foot; Krauth compares *Job*, xxv. 6, "How much less man, that is a worm? and the son of man which is a worm?"

36. **friends**, friendly; "'this grammatical impropriety,'" Henley very well remarks, "'is still so prevalent, as that the

omission of the anomalous *s* would give some uncouthness to the sound of an otherwise familiar expression.' We would not, indeed, say '*Friend* am I with you all'; we should have to turn the expression in some other way. In *T. C.* iv. 4. 71, however, we have 'And I'll grow *friend* with danger.' Nor does the pluralism of *friends* depend upon that of *you all*: 'I am friends with you' is equally the phrase in addressing a single person. *I with you am* is felt to be equivalent to *I and you are*"... (Craik on *J. C.* iii. 1. 220, "Friends am I with you all"). On this analogy Shakespeare, *H. V.* ii. 1. 108, makes Bardolph say to Nym, "Why, then, be *enemies* with me too."

38. **How should this be?** how can this possibly have happened? *sc.* that his father should have been blinded and driven to wander in this way.

39, 40. **Bad...others**, evil is the plight of him who has to conceal his griefs under the disguise of foolery, distressing not only himself but those he comes in contact with.

42. **get thee gone**, leave me for a while, now that I have some one to guide me.

44. **do it ... love**, do it for the sake of the good will you have ever borne me.

47. **'Tis the times'... blind**, *i.e.* it is nothing very wonderful that I, a blind man, should have to be guided by him, a madman; such things happen when the times are under a curse.

48. **thy pleasure**, whatever you choose to do (for I have no power to compel you); cp. *A. C.* iii. 11. 22-4, "Leave me, I pray, a little: pray you now: Nay, do so; for, indeed, *I have lost command, Therefore I pray you.*"

49. **Above the rest**, above all things.

50. **'parel**, apparel; for a list of words in which the prefix is dropped, see Abb. § 460.

51. **Come ... will**, whatever may be the result to myself.

53. **I cannot ... further**, I cannot carry out this sorry pretence of madness any further; in **daub** there is the idea of doing a thing clumsily; cp. *R. III.* iii. 5. 29, "So smooth he *daub'd* his vice with show of virtue"; for the indefinite **it**, see Abb. § 226.

55. **must**, *sc.* "daub it further."

62. **of mopping and mowing**, of making grimaces; cp. *Temp.* ii. 2. 9, "Sometimes like apes that *mow* and chatter at me"; iv. i. 47, "Each one, tripping on his toe, Will [illegible] here with *mop* and *mow*"; *mop*, from Du. *moppen*, to [illegible]c, F. *moue*, a mouth, a thrusting out of the lips: p[illegible] the technical sense in which spirits are said to anim[illegible] the mastery over human be[illegible] The names of these [illegible] Harsnet's *Declaration*,

63. **chamber-maids and waiting-women**, generally supposed to have been suggested by Harsnet's *Declaration*, etc., where three chambermaids are spoken of as being possessed; Moberly, with more likelihood, as it seems to me, regards it as "a general reference to chambermaids who perform these antics before their mistress' dressing-glass"; cp. above, iii. 2. 31, "For there was never yet fair woman but she *made mouths* in a glass."

64. **plagues**, blows of adversity.

65. **Have ... strokes**, have made submissive to all misfortunes (by robbing them of that bitterness they would have to those in their senses).

66. **Makes thee the happier**, *i.e.* by the similarity and sympathy of condition.

67-9. **Let the superfluous ... quickly**, let the voluptuary, surfeited with wealth and indulgence, who treats your divine dispensation with arrogant disdain, who refuses to see the miseries around him because he does not feel them in his own person, quickly be made acquainted with your power; for **superfluous**, = having more than enough, cp. *A. W.* i. 1. 116, "full oft we see Cold wisdom waiting on *superfluous* folly," *i.e.* fools who have more than they know what to do with while wise men are shivering with want.

70, 1. **So ... enough**, then one man's excess being distributed among the many, each would have a sufficiency; cp. above, iii. 4. 35, 6.

73. **bending head**, frowning brow, brow overhanging its base; cp. *Haml.* i. 4. 71, "the dreadful summit of the cliff That beetles o'er his base into the sea."

74. **Looks ... deep**, looks down with awful menace into the sea to whose encroachments it is a barrier. Moberly explains it as "looking down with alarm over the sea which hems it in"; but we have the same figure in ii. *H. IV.* i. 1. 154, "let not Nature's hand keep the wild flood *confined*," and in *K. J.* ii. 1. 338, "Say, shall the current of our right run on? Whose passage, vex'd with thy *impediment*, shall leave his native channel and o'erswell With course disturb'd even thy *confining* shores"; and as it is the sea, not the cliff, that tries to encroach, the idea seems more natural here; cp. also *Haml.* iv. 5. 99, "The ocean, overpeering of his *list*." Whether **in** is used here as in 'looking in a glass,' or for *into*, is disputed: Steevens and Schmidt take it in the former sense, Malone and [illegible] the latter.

76, 7. **And I** [illegible] with something valuable I have upon my person [illegible]u to better your present miserable condition.

SCENE II.

1. **Welcome**, "she welcomes him to her house after she has reached it in his company" (Delius); **mild**, referring to his remonstrances, in i. 4, against her treatment of her father.

2. **Not met**, for the omission of the auxiliary 'do' before 'not,' see Abb. § 305.

9. I **had** ... **out**, I had utterly misunderstood matters.

11. **What like**, what he ought to like: **Then** ... **further**, *i.e.* not accompany her in doors, lest the result should be a quarrel between him and her husband.

12. **cowish**, probably no connection with the verb to *cow*, to frighten, or *coward*, but formed from the substantive *cow*, that animal being very timid.

13. **undertake**, act in a spirited manner.

13, 4. **he 'll not** ... **answer**, he refuses to acknowledge the existence of injuries which would compel him to meet them in a manly way.

14, 5. **Our wishes** ... **effects**, the wishes we exchanged on our way here may before long be realized; *i.e.* her husband being got rid of, either by murder or in the coming struggle, they may be able to marry; for **effects**, cp. *A. C.* v. 2. 333, "Cæsar, thy thoughts Touch their *effects* in this," *i.e.* have been realized in Cleopatra's death: **brother**, *sc.* brother-in-law, Cornwall.

16. **Hasten his musters**, make haste to complete the enrolment of troops: **powers**, forces.

17. **the distaff**, emblematical of a woman's occupation, spinning; cp. *Cymb.* v. 3. 34, "their own nobleness, which could have turn'd A *distaff* to a lance," *i.e.* converted peaceful women into warriors; *R. II.* iii. 2. 118, "Yea, *distaff*-women manage rusty bills," *i.e.* pikes.

19. **Shall** ... **us**, shall convey letters between us; be our go-between.

20. **If you** ... **behalf**, if you on your part are prepared to run the risks necessary to ensure your good fortune.

21. **spare speech**, say nothing in reply.

STAGE DIRECTION. **a favour**, a ribbon or other token of her love.

22. **Decline your head**, *i.e.* so that she may kiss him.

24. **Conceive**, imagine to yourself all that this kiss means.

25. **Yours** ... **death**, yours through all time and in all circumstances.

28. **My fool** ... **body**, a fool, like him who calls himself my master, has no right to wifely offices from me. The quartos give 'My foot usurps my head,' 'My foot usurps my body,' or 'A fool usurps my bed.'

29. **I have** ... **whistle**, the time has been when you thought me worth a warmer welcome than you now give me; Steevens quotes from Heywood's *Proverbs*, "A poor dog that is not *worth the whistling*."

32, 3. **That nature** ... **itself**, a nature such as yours, which treats with disdain that to which it owes its origin, is not likely to be restrained within any fixed limits, is likely to go any lengths in pursuit of its objects. For **it**, see note on i. 4. 202.

34-6. **She that** ... **use**, the branch that is ready to sever itself from the trunk from which it drew the matter of its own sustenance, must necessarily wither and rot away; **sliver**, break or tear off (a branch), from A.S. *slifan*, to cleave. Warburton sees here an allusion to the *use* that witches and enchanters are said to make of *wither'd branches* in their charms; but though we have in *Macb.* iv. 1. 27, 8, "slips of yew *Sliver'd* in the moon's eclipse," as one of the ingredients in the witches' charm, this appears a very far-fetched idea here. Moberly explains, "to the use which belongs to a dead thing; burning, that is"; but even this seems to me unnecessary. Schmidt gives *mortal, causing death*, for **deadly.**

37. **No more**; ... **foolish**, it is no use your saying anything more; if the sermon you are about to preach is as foolish as its text, it will not be worth hearing.

39. **Filths** ... **themselves**, things that are filthy find no relish in anything that is not as filthy as themselves.

42. **reverence**, reverend face: **head-lugg'd**, led by the head; like dancing bears by itinerant showmen; cp. i. *H. IV.* i. 1. 83, "I am as melancholy as a gib cat or a *lugged bear*."

43. **madded**, driven mad.

44. **Could** ... **it?** is it possible that my good brother should have allowed, etc.

46. **If that**, for the conjunctional affix, see Abb. § 287: **their visible spirits**, their ministering spirits in some visible form.

47. **tame**, Schmidt remarks upon the weakness of the word here; for **vile** Collier reads *wild* to which he says **tame** is opposed.

48. **It will come**, the necessary consequence will follow.

50. **Milk-liver'd**, cowardly, mean-spirited; a bloodless liver being a sign of cowardice; cp. ii. *H. IV.* iv. 3. 113, "The second property of your excellent sherris is, the warming of the blood; which, before cold and settled, left the liver white and pale,

which is the badge of pusillanimity and cowardice"; and see note on ii. 2. 15.

51. **for blows ... for wrongs**, which invite blows, wrongs.

52. **an eye discerning**, an eye able to distinguish.

54, 5. **Fools do ... mischief**, fools, like yourself, pity villains, like my father, when they are punished before they can accomplish their wicked purposes, such as my father contemplated in bringing the French army down upon us.

55. **Where 's thy drum?** *i.e.* how is it that you have as yet made no preparation for meeting these foes?

56. **noiseless**, in which there is no noise, as there should be, of troops mustering for the combat.

57. **thy state ... threat**, is already threatening your rule; this is Jennens' emendation of the first quartos, 'thy state begins thereat,' the second quarto giving 'thy slaier begins threats.'

58. **moral**, moralizing; cp. *A. Y. L.* ii. 7. 29, "When I did hear The motley fool thus *moral* on the time."

60, 1. **Proper deformity ... woman**, deformity when seen in a devil is not so horrid as when belonging to a woman; of the one it is a proper, appropriate characteristic; in the other, it is the last thing that one expects; **Proper deformity** seems to me to mean 'deformity when seen as belonging to.' Delius explains, "deformity which conceals itself under a pleasing, fair outside, and which appears all the more horrid from its internal contrast," comparing *T. N.* ii. 2. 30, "proper-false," *i.e.* externally fair, internally false; but, as Wright points out, with this interpretation we should expect some such word as *specious* instead of **horrid** in the latter line.

62, 3. **Thou changed ... feature**, O you, in whom the real self is changed and hidden by fury, do not, if you have any sense of shame, make yourself into a monster; **self-cover'd**, seems to mean covered as to yourself, your real personality, not covered by yourself, and **self-** to belong equally to **changed**; **feature** generally, if not always, in Shakespeare includes the bodily form as a whole, not merely the distinctive parts of the face.

63-7. **Were 't my fitness ... thee**, if it became me to give way to passion, these hands of mine are well enough inclined to rend you in pieces; but fiend as you are in nature, you are protected from all injury at my hands by bearing the form of woman. For **Were 't my fitness**, cp. *Oth.* i. 2. 83, "Were it my cue to fight"; for **howe'er** = though, cp. *Cymb.* iv. 2. 47, "This youth, *howe'er* distress'd, appears he hath had Good ancestors."

68. **Marry**, a corruption of 'by Mary,' *i.e.* the Mother of Christ, to avoid the profanation or its penalties: the speech is broken off by the entrance of the messenger.

71. **going to put out**, as he was about to, etc. For the participle without the noun, see Abb. § 378.

73. **bred**, brought up in his household: **remorse**, pity; as more generally in Shakespeare: now always as compunction of conscience for some bad deed or thought.

74. **Opposed ... act**, placed himself in the way to prevent the deed; we now say 'to oppose an act,' or 'to stand up against an act.'

74, 5. **bending ... master**, drawing his sword and holding it pointed towards his master.

76. **Flew on him**, rushed furiously upon him: **amongst them**, in the midst of them, if the reading is right; Hanmer gives *they* for **and**, *i.e.* some one of them, meaning Regan.

77. **But not ... stroke**, but not without his receiving that deadly stroke.

78. **Hath ... after**, has obliged him to tread the same path of death.

78-80. **This shows ... venge**! this fact, that you can so speedily avenge crime, shows that you are above and watch the deeds of men.

82. **craves**, urgently needs.

83. **One way ... well**, in so far as his death helps my project of seizing upon the whole kingdom, this news is good.

84-6. **But being ... life**, but the fact of her being now a widow (and therefore free to marry again) and my beloved Gloucester being with her, may pull down upon my head the projects I had built up and make life utterly hateful to me; cp. *Cor.* ii. 1. 216, "*The buildings of my fancy*," my castles in the air, as we say.

87. **tart**, sour, unpleasant to the taste.

90. **Come**, he was, had, come.

91. **I met ... again**, I met him on his way back; cp. *Cor.* i. 3. 32, "Methinks I hear *hither* your husband's drum," *i.e.* the sound of your husband's drum *borne hither*.

93. **inform'd against him**, gave information against his father.

95. **I live**, *i.e.* my object in living shall be to thank, etc.

SCENE III.

1, 2. **Why ... reason?** "The King of France being no longer a necessary personage, it was fit that some pretext for getting rid of him should be formed before the play was too near advanced towards a conclusion... and therefore his dismission (which could

be effected only by a sudden recall to his own dominions) was to be accounted for before the audience" ... (Steevens).

3. **Something ... state**, some business of state had been left incomplete.

4, 5. **which imports ... danger**, and this incompleteness involves so much cause for fear and so much danger to the kingdom; for **imports**, = implies, cp. *A. C.* ii. 2. 135, "all great fears, which now *import* their dangers"; **fear and danger** is almost a hendiadys, = fearful danger.

7. **Who**, for instances of the neglect of the inflection, see Abb. § 274; **general**, as general commanding the troops.

12. **trill'd down**, slowly trickled down; Walker quotes Jonson, *Every Man out of his Humour*, iii. 2, "how he wept if you mark'd it! did you see how the tears *trill'd?*" and two instances from Browne, *Britannia's Pastorals*. In this sense, the word, says Skeat, "is merely a particular use of *trill* = to turn round and round."

13, 4. **was a queen ... passion**, was able to control her feeling.

16, 7. **patience ... goodliest**, calmness and grief vied with each other as to which should lend her the greater charm. Somewhat similarly in *T. N.* ii. 4. 17, 8, we have "She sat like patience on a monument, Smiling at grief."

19. **Were ... way**, if the reading is genuine, probably means 'were like sunshine and rain in a better way'; 'were like sunshine and rain, only more beautiful'; the better way, according to Boaden, consisting "simply in the smiles seeming unconscious of tears; whereas the sunshine has a *watery look* through the falling drops of rain—'Those happy smiles ... seem'd *not to know* What guests were in her eyes.'" As conjectures we have "a wetter May," "a better day," "a better May," etc., "better" in the two latter being taken as an epithet implying eminence or perfection.

smilets, a diminutive; tokens of gladness scarcely definite enough to be called smiles.

21. **which parted thence**, and these guests, the tears, bade farewell to her eyes.

24. **If all ... it**, if all could show it in so seemly guise: **question**, not inquiry, but speech, talk, as frequently in Shakespeare.

29. **Let pity ... believed!** let no one believe in the existence of pity.

31. **And clamour moisten'd**, smothered in tears her cries of indignation; Walker reading 'clamour-moisten'd' takes the construction to be 'shook the water from her heavenly and clamour-moisten'd eyes,' *i.e.* eyes to which her passionate laments had brought tears; Grant White reads 'And clamour-moisten'd,

then,' etc., *i.e.* 'And with her cheeks wet with her outburst of sorrow, away she started,' etc. Delius says **moisten'd** is here used intransitively; 'clamour became moist.'

32. **To deal ... alone**, to bear and conquer her grief in privacy.

33. **conditions**, temperaments, dispositions.

34. **one ... mate**, "the same husband and the same wife" (Johnson).

35. **spoke**, the action being regarded simply as past without reference to the present or completion; cp. *Cymb.* iv. 2. 66, "I *saw* him not these many years, and yet I know 'tis he"; and see Abb. § 347.

39. **sometime** and *sometimes*, are used indifferently by Shakespeare in all their senses: **in ... tune**, when his mind is less disordered than usual; for the figure cp. *Haml.* iii. 1. 166, "that noble and most sovereign reason Like sweet bells jangled, *out of tune* and harsh."

41. **yield**, consent, give way to our entreaties that he should do so.

42. **so elbows him**, "so stands at his elbow and reminds him of the past" (Wright). Schmidt says that it perhaps means so pushes him aside; and this is the commoner meaning of the word, though Wright's explanation is more in keeping with the context.

44. **foreign casualties**, anything that might befall her in a foreign country: **dear rights**, the inheritance which was justly hers, was precious to her.

49. **'Tis so ... afoot**, it is as has been reported, they are on the march.

51. **some dear cause**, a reason of great importance.

52. **Will ... awhile**, will oblige me to remain for a time in concealment.

53, 4. **When ... acquaintance**, when it transpires who I am, you will have no reason to regret having been so friendly towards me.

SCENE IV.

1, 2. **he was met ... sea**, only a short time ago he was seen wandering about raging like the sea in a storm.

3. **fumiter**, called in *H. V.* v. 2. 46, "fumitory," the name it now bears, though **fumiter** was the original form, a contraction of F. *fume de terre*, smoke of the earth, named from its rank smell: **furrow-weeds**, weeds growing in the furrows made by the plough.

4. **bur-docks**, apparently the same as the "burs" in *H. V.* v. 2. 52, "hateful docks, rough thistles, kecksies, *burs*," though properly speaking the 'burs' "are the unopened flowers of the Burdock (*Arctium lappa*) ... a very handsome plant when seen in its native habitat by the side of a brook ... but not a plant to introduce into a garden" ... (Ellacombe, *Plant-Lore of Shakespeare*, pp. 32, 3): **hemlock**, "one of the most poisonous of a suspicious family (the Umbelliferæ) ... Yet the Hemlock adds largely to the beauty of our hedge-rows; its spotted tall stems and its finely cut leaves make it a handsome weed, and the dead stems and dried umbels are marked features in the winter appearance of the hedges" ... (*id.*): **cuckoo-flowers**, a name generally given to the meadow-cress (*Cardamine pratensis*) because it springs up at the time when the cuckoo comes. In *L. L. L.* v. 2. 906, we have "*cuckoo*-buds of yellow hue," which Ellacombe considers the same as **cuckoo-flowers** and says that it cannot be the meadow-cress, because that plant has not yellow flowers, as in *L. L. L.*, nor does it grow among corn, as here. He therefore takes it for either the cowslip or the buttercup.

5. **Darnel**, "in Shakespeare's time, like Cockle, was the general name for any hurtful weed ... it is not only injurious from choking the corn, but its seeds become mixed with the true wheat, and so in Dorsetshire—and perhaps in other parts—it has the name of 'Cheat,' from its false likeness to wheat"—(*id.*).

6. **our sustaining corn**, the corn which is to us 'the staff of life': **century**, company of a hundred men.

8. **What can ... wisdom**, what is in the power of man's wisdom to do; cp. *Haml.* iv. 7. 85, "they *can* well on horseback"; Bacon, *Essays, Of Great Place*, "In evil, the best condition is not to will; the second, not to *can*."

9. **In the restoring his**, for the definite article preceding a verbal followed by an object, see Abb. § 93.

10. **helps**, cures; cp. *Temp.* ii. 2. 97, "I will *help* his ague": **all my outward worth**, everything I possess.

12. **foster-nurse**, nourisher; cp. ii. *H. IV.* iii. 1. 6, "O gentle sleep, Nature's soft *nurse*."

13-5. **that ... anguish**, to call that forth in him there are many medicinal herbs of power effective in closing the sufferer's eyes: **simples**, single herbs as opposed to medicine compounded of different ingredients; cp. *R. J.* iv. 1. 40, "I do remember an apothecary ... which late I noted ... Culling of *simples*."

15-7. **All blest ... tears**! may all hitherto unknown healing herbs, all undiscovered plants efficacious in disease, be fertilized by these tears I shed! for **virtues**, cp. ii. *H. IV.* iv. 5. 76, "culling from every flower The *virtuous sweets*"; and for the **idea**, *A. C.* iv. 2. 38, "Grace grow where those drops fall!"

17, 8. **be aidant ... distress**! help to cure the good man's agony of mind!

19, 20. **Lest ... it**, lest his unbridled fury put an end to that life which now is without the guidance of reason.

22. **our preparation**, our forces arrayed to meet them; cp. *Oth.* i. 3. 14, "The Turkish *preparation* makes for Rhodes."

25. **Therefore**, for that reason; viz. that she was seeking to help her father.

26. **important**, importunate; cp. *M. A.* ii. 1. 74, "if the prince be too *important*, tell him there is measure in everything."

27. **blown ambition**, inflated with the hopes of conquest; cp. *T. N.* ii. 5. 48, "look how imagination *blows* him."

SCENE V.

2. **with much ado**, not till great efforts had been made to persuade him.

4. **Lord ... home?** is it true that Lord Edmund, though accompanying my sister home, never spoke with her husband? Her jealous suspicions of Edmund's intimacy with Goneril are aroused by the circumstance.

6, **What might ... him?** what can be the purport of my, etc.; a less direct way of asking than 'what *is*.'

8. **'Faith**, *i.e.* in faith; to tell you the truth.

9. **ignorance**, folly, stupidity.

12, 3. **to despatch ... life**, to put him out of the misery of his blindness.

16, 7. **Our troops ... dangerous**, she wishes to delay his taking the letter, and perhaps to take measures to get it from him.

18. **charged my duty**, laid it upon me as an urgent duty to convey, etc.

19, 20. **Might not ... word?** could you not have made known her objects by word of mouth?

21. **love thee much**, give you great proofs of my regard.

24. **at her ... here**, on the occasion of her late visit.

25. **œillades**, amorous glances, loving looks; F. *œillade*, an ogling look.

26. **of her bosom**, in her confidence; cp. i. *H. IV.* i. 3. 266, "You ... shall secretly into the *bosom* creep Of that same noble lord"; *J. C.* v. 1. 7, "I am *in their bosoms*."

28. **I speak in understanding**, I have good grounds for my belief.

29. **note**, letter.

30. **have talk'd**, have come to an understanding on the **matter**.

31. **for my hand**, as a husband to me.

35. **I pray**, ... **her**, I trust you will urge her to summon up all her wisdom and abandon all hope of marrying Lord Edmund.

38. **Preferment** ... **off**, any one who puts an end to his life may be sure of high reward from me for the deed.

40. **What** ... **follow**, on which side I am.

SCENE VI.

1. **that same hill**, the hill you spoke of; the "cliff" of iv. 1. 73.

2. **how we labour**, how toilsome the ascent is.

3. **even**, level: **Horrible**, used adverbially.

5, 6. **Why, then** ... **anguish**, then it must be that the loss of your eyes has impaired your other senses also.

8. **In better** ... **matter**, in better language and more coherently.

12. **dizzy**, *i.e.* how dizzy it makes one feel.

13. **choughs**, the red-legged crow. Hasting, *The Ornithology of Shakespeare*, p. 116, says, "It is not improbable that the chough, which affects precipices and sea-cliffs, may once have frequented the cliffs at Dover; but whatever may have been the case formerly, this haunt, if it ever was one, has long since been deserted."

14. **gross**, large.

15. **samphire**, a herb which "being found only on rocks ... was naturally associated with St. Peter, and so it was called in Italian Herba di San Pietro ... in other words, Samphire is simply a corruption of St. Peter. The plant grows round all the coasts of Great Britain and Ireland, wherever there are suitable rocks on which it can grow, and on all the coasts of Europe, except the northern coasts ... The leaves form the pickle ... now much out of fashion. In Shakespeare's time the gathering of samphire was a regular trade, and Steevens quotes from Smith's *History of Waterford* to show the danger attending the trade :— 'It is terrible to see how people gather it, hanging by rope several fathoms from the top of impending rocks, as it were in the air'" ... (Ellacombe).

18. **tall anchoring bark**, large vessel at anchor; for **tall**, in this sense, cp. *M. V.* iii. 1. 6, "the carcases of many a *tall* ship"; *Oth.* ii. 1. 79.

19. **Diminish'd** ... **cock**, looking no larger than her cock-boat; **cock**, O. F. *coque*, W. *cwch*, a boat.

19, 20. **her cock**, ... **sight**, her cock-boat looking no bigger than a buoy.

21. **unnumber'd**, innumerable: **idle**, barren, unprofitable.

23, 4. **and the** ... **headlong**, and I, becoming giddy, be hurled headlong down the cliff; **the deficient sight**, the eyes which are unable long to look down such a dizzy height. Delius notices that in the only other instance of **deficient** in Shakespeare, the word refers, as here, to a defect of the senses, *Oth.* i. 3. 63, "For nature so preposterously to err, Being not *deficient*, blind, or lame of sense, Sans witchcraft could not."

27. **leap upright**, leap into the air: the word **upright** was too much for the prosaic Warburton, who remarks "He who leaps thus must needs fall again on his feet upon the place whence he rose"; a remark to which Malone replies with caustic truth, "If Warburton had tried such a leap *within a foot* of the edge of a precipice, before he undertook the revision of these plays, the world would, I fear, have been deprived of his labours."

30. **Prosper** ... **thee**! make it bring luck to you.

31. **let me** ... **going**, he wishes for an assurance that Edgar has gone before he takes the leap, and this he can only have by sound.

33, 4. **Why I do** ... **it**, "combines '*Why* I trifle is *to cure*' and '*My trifling is done* to cure.' In itself it is illogical" (Abb. § 411).

35. **renounce**, forswear, abandon.

36. **Shake** ... **off**, calmly put off this burden, life; not in angry rebellion to your wills for so afflicting me.

37. **and not fall**, without giving way to the sin of, etc.

38. **opposeless**, irresistible; for the suffix *-less*, = not able to be, see Abb. § 446.

39, 40. **My snuff** ... **out**, I should leave the ashes of my weary life to burn themselves out; the figure is that of the 'snuff' of a candle, that part of its wick which the tallow or oil no longer nourishes and which therefore can give forth no light; cp. *A. W.* i. 2. 59, "'Let me not live,' quoth he, After my flame lacks oil, to be the *snuff* Of younger spirits," *i.e.* to be regarded by them as useless.

42-4. **And yet** ... **theft**, and yet perhaps I ought not to pretend to leave him, for I do not know whether imagination may not rob the body of the life within it, when that life itself is willing to be stolen; *i.e.* whether imagination may not produce the very

effect that an actual fall from this height would produce, seeing how anxious he is to die; conceit, that which is conceived, whether the conception be a true or a false one; treasury, so "casket" in *K. J.* v. 1. 40, "They found him dead and cast into the streets, An empty casket, where the jewel of life By some damn'd hand was robb'd and ta'en away."

45. **By this ... past,** by this time thought would have been at an end to him.

47. **pass,** *i.e.* away, die.

49. **gossamer,** the filmy threads of the spider's web; cp. *R. J.* ii. 6. 18, "A lover may bestride the *gossamer* That idles in the wanton summer air." Skeat says that the provincial English (Craven dialect) name for gossamer is 'summer-goose,' and the word probably nothing but a corruption of 'goose-summer' or 'summer-goose,' from the downy appearance of the film.

50. **precipitating,** falling headlong; we now use the word in a transitive sense only.

51. **Thou 'dst,** thou hadst, *i.e.* would have.

52. **Hast heavy substance,** *i.e.* are not mere gossamer, feathers, but a substantial body.

53. **at each,** joined each to the other; Wright suggests 'at *eke*,' *i.e.* added to each other.

55. **Thy life 's a miracle,** it is a miracle that you still live.

57. **this chalky bourn,** this chalk cliff that is the boundary of the land.

58. **a-height,** on high; cp. *C. E.* v. 1. 170, "My master and his man are both broke loose, Beaten the maids *a-row*," *i.e.* in a row, one after the other; and above, ii. 2. 66: **shrill-gorged,** shrill-throated.

61, 2. **Is wretchedness ... death?** are the wretched not even allowed to end their wretchedness by death? Cp. *A. C.* v. 2. 41, 2, "*Pro.* Do not yourself such wrong (said as Cleopatra tries to kill herself), who are in this Reliev'd, but not betray'd. *Cleo.* "What, of death too, That rids our dogs of languish?"

62-4. **'Twas yet ... will,** there was still some comfort left in the world when a miserable man could by suicide cheat the tyrant and render his proud will of none effect; for **beguile,** cp. above, ii. 2. 102, and below, v. 3. 152; for the idea, cp. *J. C.* i. 3. 89-92, "I know where I will wear this dagger then; Cassius from bondage will deliver Cassius: Therein, ye gods, you make the weak most strong; Therein, ye gods, you tyrants do defeat."

66. **above all strangeness,** not merely strange, but miraculous.

71. **Horns ... sea,** horns twisted and curled like the crested waves of the sea, the waves as they roll in ridges; cp. *H. V.* iii.

6. 108, "his face is all bubukles, and *whelks*, and knobs." A *whelk* is, acccording to Skeat, a small pimple, the diminutive of *wheal*, a pimple, and not connected with *whelk*, a mollusc with a spiral shell, in which the *h* has no proper place; but here, at all events, Shakespeare must have had the latter word in his mind.

73. **clearest**, "purest; most free from evil" (Johnson); cp. *Tim.* iv. 3. 27, "you *clear* heavens!"

73, 4. **who make ... impossibilities**, who make things impossible to men a source of honour to themselves in the gratitude paid to them; here it was impossible for Gloucester to have lived, if he had taken such a leap as he is led to believe he has taken, unless it had been for the intervention of the gods, to whom therefore he is bound to pay honour.

75. **I do remember now**, I have come to my right senses again, which I had lost when I had ventured to think of relieving myself of my troubles without waiting the good pleasure of the gods.

76, 7. **till ... die**, till it itself gives the signal for release.

80. **free**, untroubled, unconcerned; cp. above, iii. 4. 11, iii. 6. 103.

81, 2. **The safer sense ... thus**, "the 'safer sense' seems to me to mean *the eye-sight*, which, says Edgar, will never more serve the unfortunate Lear so well as those senses which Gloucester has remaining will serve him, who is now returned to his right mind. The *eye-sight* is probably the 'safer sense,' in allusion to our vulgar proverb 'Seeing is believing'... Gloucester afterwards laments 'the stiffness of his vile sense'" (Blakeway). Johnson would read 'saner,' Warburton 'sober'; but Blakeway's explanation is undoubtedly the right one. For **accommodate**, cp. above, iii. 4. 98.

83. **touch me**, punish me; or, perhaps, lay hands upon me in order to punish.

86. **Nature's ... respect**, a disjointed remark, which without its context is probably incapable of explanation. Schmidt interprets "a born king can never lose his natural rights"; which I cannot believe to be meant.

87. **press-money**, earnest-money; properly *prest*-money, money given in engaging the services of any one, F. *prest*, ready. Wedgwood has shown that it has no connection with the verb to 'press,' in the sense of to 'crush,' 'squeeze': **a crow-keeper**, a rustic employed to scare birds from the crops, *i.e.* one who is no sportsman.

88. **a clothier's yard**, an arrow a cloth-yard long; Steevens quotes the old ballad of Chevy Chace, "An arrow of a *cloth-yard* long Up to the head drew he."

89. **will do 't**, will be enough to settle the business, *i.e.* to catch the mouse, toasted cheese being a common bait in a mouse-trap.

89, 90. **There 's my gauntlet**, I throw down my gauntlet for you to take up, if you are ready to meet me in combat: **I 'll prove it on a giant**, I am ready to fight on this cause with a giant: **the brown bills**, *i.e.* the troops armed with brown bills, *i.e.* a kind of halberd used by foot-soldiers, painted brown. The chemical process of 'browning' metal did not, according to Murray's *Eng. Dict.*, come into use until 1808.

91. **O, well-flown, bird!** Lear fancies himself engaged in hawking, in which sport 'well-flown' was a term of encouragement to the hawk. Steevens says the expression is so used in *A Woman Killed with Kindness*: **i' the clout**, Lear's mind now flies off to archery; the **clout** being the pin in the centre of the target, to hit the clout was to display the greatest possible skill.

92. **the word**, the pass-word, watch-word; cp. *R. III.* v. 3. 349, "Our ancient *word* of courage, fair Saint George."

96. **Ha!... beard!** mistaking Gloucester for his daughter, of whose cruelties his mind is full.

97. **white hairs**, *i.e.* the wisdom of age.

98, 9. **To say... said!** said "recollecting the facility with which his courtiers veered about in their answers to suit his varying moods, just as Osric does to Hamlet" (Clarke). Grant White adopts a suggestion made to Pye, "To say *ay* and *no* to everything I said *ay* and *no* to, was no good divinity."

99, 100. **was no good divinity**, was very poor theology, was a very poor way of showing their belief in me; "the reference is to *Corinthians*, i. 18, 'Our word to you was not yea and nay'" (Moberly).

101. **would not peace**, would not be still.

102. **smelt 'em out**, scented their duplicity.

103. **men... words**, truthful.

105. **trick**, peculiarity; used also of the face, and the manner; cp. *K. J.* i. 1. 85, "He hath a *trick* of Cœur-de-lion's face"; *T. N.* ii. 5. 164, "put thyself into the *trick* of singularity."

106. **every inch a king**, a king in every respect.

107. **When I... quakes**, when I look angry, see how terror-stricken are my subjects; **the subject**, used collectively.

113. **O ruin'd... nature!** O remnant of that which nature once made in such excellent form!

114. **so... nought**, so decay and lose its primal glory.

116. **squiny**, "to look asquint. The word is used by Armin, Shakespeare's fellow-comedian, in his *Nest of Ninnies*, "The

World queasie stomackt ... *squinnies* at this, and looks as one scorning" (Malone): **No, ... love**, Lear, in his madness, fancies Gloucester to be the blind Cupid, and says, 'you may try all your artifices upon me, but they will be of no effect, you will not be able to make me fall in love.'

119. **I would ... report**, if I had been told that he (Lear) had fallen into such a wretched state of madness, I would not have believed it: **it is**, it really is a fact; **is**, emphatic.

122. **What, ... eyes?** what, do you expect me to read with the empty sockets of my eyes? cp. *W. T.* v. 2. 14, "they seemed almost, with staring on one another, to tear the *cases* of their eyes."

123. **are you ... me?** is that your meaning? cp. *A. C.* iii. 2. 89, "are you *thereabout?*"

125. **heavy case**, evil condition; with a pun on **case**, and another on **light**.

127. **I see it feelingly**, I perceive it in only too heartfelt a manner; but with a quibble upon doing so by the sense of touch.

128, 9. **What, ... eyes**, what, are you mad, and think it can only be seen with the eyes, that you speak of feeling it as though that were but a poor test of perception? Lear takes Gloucester's **feelingly** in a literal sense as though he had said he had no perception except through the sense of touch. Also, being mad himself, he is ready to assume that others are so, while he himself is sane.

131, 2. **change ... thief**, let them change places, and then you will not be able to tell which is the justice, etc.; **handy-dandy**, an expression still used by children when one of them putting something into his hands held together, and quickly shifting them about, calls upon another to guess in which of them the thing is concealed, using the words 'handy-dandy, which will you have?'

135. **image**, that in which the idea of authority is embodied; perhaps **great** belongs rather to **authority** than to **image**.

135, 6. **a dog's ... office**, anything in official position is obeyed.

138, 9. **Through ... all**, in beggars, vices, however small, are easily seen; in rich men, vices, however great, go unnoticed. Furness prefers the reading of the folios '*great* vices,' with the meaning that 'when looked at through tattered clothes, all vices are great.'

139, 40. **Plate sin ... breaks**, clothe sin in the plate armour of wealth, and the stroke of justice, however powerful, recoils harmlessly from it, the only injury done being to itself (justice).

142. **I'll able them**, "I will take off all legal disabilities which they may have incurred by their crimes" (Heath).

143. **that**, *sc.* assurance.

145. **scurvy**, mean, base, contemptible.

148. **matter ... mix'd** ! a mixture of what is material, relevant, to the subject, and what is irrelevant.

150. **wilt weep**, are desirous of weeping.

152. **hither**, into the world.

153. **smell the air**, taste this life.

154. **wawl**, cry aloud.

157. **stage**, on which we are to play a part ; cp. *A. Y. L.* ii. 7. 139, "All the world 's a *stage*, And all the men and women merely players" : **this'**, *i.e.* this is ; for this contraction, see Abb. § 461 : **a good block**, the **block** being used for the hat, or for that on which a hat was shaped, as in *M. A.* i. 1. 75, "He wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat ; it ever changes with the next *block*." Lear is here generally supposed to take hold of his own hat, or perhaps Curan's hat, and, feeling it, to conceive the idea of shoeing a troop of horse with *felt*, *i.e.* the material out of which hats were made. Among other instances of the use of **block** in this sense, Steevens quotes Beaumont and Fletcher, *Wit at Several Weapons*, iv. 1, "I am so haunted with this broad brim'd hat Of the last progress *block*" ; Decker, *The Seven Deadly Sinnes of London*, "The *block* for his head alters faster than the *felt*-maker can fit him."

158, 9. **to shoe ... felt**, "this delicate stratagem," says Malone, "had actually been put in practice fifty years before Shakespeare was born, as we learn from Lord Herbert's *Life of Henry the Eighth*, 'the ladye Margaret ... caused there a juste to be held in an extraordinary manner ; the place being a fore-roome raised high from the ground by many steps, and paved with black square stones like marble ; while the horses, to prevent sliding, were *shod with felt* or flocks."

164. **No rescue** ? does no one come to my rescue ? am I to be allowed to be taken prisoner without any one stirring to save me ?

165. **The natural ... fortune**, "born to be the sport of fortune" (Walker) ; perhaps with an allusion to 'natural' in the sense of 'idiotic.' Cp. *R. J.* iii. 1. 139, "O, I am *fortune's fool !*"

166. **You ... ransom**, I am ready to pay ransom for my liberty.

168. **No ... myself** ? will no one help me ? am I to be left all alone ?

169. **a man of salt**, one who will dissolve away in salt tears.

171. **and laying**, and for laying, to lay.

172. **like a bridegroom**, cp. *A. C.* iv. 14. 100, "but I will be *A bridegroom in my death*, and run into 't As to a lover's bed."

174. **My masters**, my fine fellows; a familiar title, sometimes implying respect, sometimes used ironically.

176. **Then there 's life in 't**, then there's hope still; cp. *A. C.* iii. 13. 192, "Come on my queen; There 's sap in 't yet"; **get it**, succeed in your object.

177. **Sa, sa, sa, sa**, probably the same word as "Sessa" in ii. 6. 72; here an incitement to them to pursue him.

179. **Past ... king**! which, in the case of a king, no words can describe.

181. **Which twain ... to**, which two of her children have brought down upon her; **twain** was formerly masculine, *two*, feminine and neuter.

182. **speed you**, make haste; I have no time to loiter.

183. **toward**, in preparation; see note on ii. 1. 10.

184. **Most ... vulgar**, that rumour is most certain and is in every one's mouth.

185. **by your favour**, if you will excuse my asking.

187, 8. **Near ... thought**, close at hand and speedily marching on: every hour we expect to descry the main body.

189. **Though that**, for the conjunctional affix, see Abb. § 287.

192. **my worser spirit**, my inclination to rebel against your wills.

195. **made ... blows**, whom fortune has humbled to endure anything; cp. above, iv. 1. 64, 5, "thou whom the heavens Have humbled to all strokes."

196, 7. **Who, ... pity**, who, taught by personal and heartfelt sorrows, am quick to conceive pity for others; cp. *W. T.* iv. 2. 8, "to whose *feeling sorrows* I might be some allay."

198. **some biding**, some place where you may rest.

199, 200. **The bounty ... boot**! may heaven send you its good fortune and its blessing in abundance; **To boot, and boot**, over and over again, A.S. *bót*, profit, advantage, something added over and above.

201. **proclaim'd prize**, one who has been proclaimed as a traitor and on whose head a price has been put.

204. **thyself remember**, think over the sins of your past life and ask pardon of heaven.

205, 6. **Now let ... to 't**, Gloucester is only too willing to die and hopes that Oswald's hand may speedily despatch him.

207. **support**, take the side of: **publish'd**, publicly denounced.

208, 9. **Lest that ... thee**, lest you suffer the same misfortune with him, *i.e.* die by my sword.

210. Chill not, I will not; "when," says Steevens, "our ancient writers introduce a rustic, they commonly allot him this Somersetshire dialect." Ellis (*Early English Pronunciation*) says that the contractions *cham, chas, chil* for ich am, ich was, ich will, are mentioned by Gill, who was born the same year as Shakespeare as a southern pronunciation.

212. **go your gait**, go your own way.

213. **An chud ... life**, if I was going to allow myself to be frightened out of my life by mere bluster; **chud**, = ich would, *i.e.* I should.

215, 6. **keep out ... harder**, keep off, I warn you, or I shall try which is the harder, your head or my staff; **ise try**, cp. *R. J.* i. 3. 10; according to Gifford, **costard** means properly a large kind of apple, and was thence applied to the head; **ballow**, Murray, *Eng. Dict.*, says that this word is found in this passage only, "but no such word seems to exist, or to have any etymological justification."

218. **Chill pick your teeth**, perhaps might be rendered by the expressive Americanism, 'I'll knock sparks out of you.'

219. **foins**, thrusts; cp. ii. *H. IV.* ii. 4. 252, "Thou little tidy Bartholomew boar-pig, when wilt thou leave fighting o' days and *foining* o' nights, and begin to patch up thine old body for heaven?"

221. **If ever ... thrive**, as you hope to prosper.

222. **about me**, on my person.

224. **Upon ... party**, in the ranks of the British army.

226. **As duteous ... mistress**, as ready to serve his mistress in all wickedness.

227. **would desire**, could possibly desire.

230. **May be my friends**, may prove useful to me.

231. **death's-man**, "Edgar is sorry that he anticipated the hangman" (Schmidt).

232. **Leave, gentle wax**, with your permission; excuse the liberty.

234. **Their papers ... lawful**, to rip up their papers is a less offence.

236, 7. **if your ... not**, if you are not lacking in determination.

237. **time ... offered**, opportunities of time and place will offer themselves abundantly.

237, 8. **There is ... conqueror**, if the opportunity is not seized of making away with him while these commotions last, as may easily be done, we shall be no nearer our desire.

240. **for your labour**, as a reward for the trouble you will have taken.

242. **servant**, not to be taken more literally than the same term in official correspondence.

244. **O undistinguish'd ... will**, Dyce explains **undistinguish'd space** as "space whose limits are not to be distinguished"; White paraphrases the line, "O unmarked, boundless reach of woman's will"; Hudson, taking **undistinguish'd** for *undistinguishable*, like 'unnumbered' for *innumerable*, gives, "Woman's will has no distinguishable bounds or no assignable limits; there is no telling what she will do or where she will stop"; Wright, "So wide reaching [is a woman's will] that its workings cannot be discovered"; Schmidt, "'Oh undistinguishable range of the female appetite!' Edgar is astonished that a woman can be found to prefer Edmund to the noble Albany." It seems to me that **undistinguish'd** is not to be taken in the passive sense given it by Dyce, Hudson, and Wright, but as having the force of the termination in *-ing*, and that the line means, 'O woman's will that sets no limits to its own range, area'; as in *W. T.* i. 2. 133, 4, "false As dice are to be wish'd by one *that fixes No bourn 'twixt his and mine.*"

246. **the exchange**, what she hopes to gain in exchange.

247. **rake up**, bury and cover with sand.

247, 8. **the post ... lechers**, you, the villanous go-between of murderous adulterers; in **unsanctified**, Steevens thinks there is a reference to his burial in unconsecrated ground.

248. **in the mature time**, when the time is ripe; **mature**, apparently, as Abbott says, accented on the former syllable.

249. **ungracious**, scandalous, shameful.

250. **death-practised**, whose life is plotted against.

251. **That ... tell**, that I am able to give him information of your death and of the business on which you were employed.

252-4. **how stiff ... sorrows**! how obstinate, and therefore hateful to me, is my reason in that it does not allow me to bow in madness, like the king, under my burden of woe, but forces me to retain a vivid sense of them: **distract**, distracted.

256. **wrong imaginations**, fanciful ideas wide of the reality; hallucinations.

259. **bestow**, place, obtain shelter and care for.

SCENE VII.

2. **To match**, adequately reward.

3. **And every ... me**, and no recompense I shall mete out to you will be sufficient in my eyes.

4. **To be ... o'erpaid**, to have my services acknowledged is for me to be overpaid.

5, 6. **All my ... so**, in all that I tell you of events since you went to France nothing has been exaggerated, nothing extenuated; you have the bare, naked, truth; for **modest**, cp. above, ii. 4. 24: **suited**, dressed.

7. **weeds**, clothes; A.S. *wǽd*, *wæde*, a garment; cp. *Cor.* ii. 3. 229, "With what contempt he wore the humble *weed*": **memories**, memorials, remembrances; cp. *A. C.* iii. 13. 163, "Till by degrees the *memory* of my womb ... Lie graveless"; *A. Y. L.* ii. 3. 3, "O you *memory* Of old Sir Rowland!"

9. **Yet ... intent**, for me to be recognized at present interferes with my fixed design; for **made**, Collier's MS. Corrector gives *main*, which Staunton thinks a very plausible change.

10, 1. **My boon ... meet**, I ask it as a favour that you appear not to recognize me till circumstances show me that the proper moment has come for me to reveal myself.

15. **abused**, cruelly treated.

16. **wind up**, *i.e.* to the proper pitch at which they will no longer be **untuned and jarring**; cp. *Haml.* iii. 1. 166, "Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh."

17. **child-changed**, it is doubtful whether this means changed to a child, *i.e.* brought into his dotage, or changed by the conduct of his children: **So ... majesty**, may your majesty be pleased to give us permission.

19. **Be ... knowledge**, I leave you to judge as to the proper moment for awaking him; be guided by your judgement.

20. **I' the sway ... will**, according as your wishes dictate: **Is he arrayed?** have you put fresh clothes upon him?

24. **of his temperance**, of his being in his sound senses; for **temperance**, = calmness, cp. *Haml.* iii. 2. 8, "for in the very torrent ... of passion, you must acquire ... a *temperance* that may give it smoothness."

25. **Louder**, *i.e.* let it play louder. Bucknill, *The Mad Folk of Shakespeare*, p. 222, says that modern physicians appear to have little faith in the effects of music upon the insane when simply listened to, and quotes Esquirol, "I have often employed music, but very rarely obtained any success thereby. It calms and composes the mind, but does not cure. I have seen insane persons whom music rendered furious; ... I believe the ancients exaggerated the effects of music, while the facts recorded by modern writers are not sufficiently numerous to determine under what circumstances it possibly may be of benefit"...

26, 7. **Restoration ... lips**, may my life be the medicine which shall bring to you restoration of your senses; **Thy medicine**, that

which is to be medicine to you (Lear); the construction is 'let restoration hang.'

29. **Have ... made**! have made in one so venerable as you; cp. above, iv. 2. 42.

30, 1. **Had you not ... them**, even if you had not been their father, your venerable appearance ought to have been a sufficient claim to gentle treatment; for **challeng'd**, = claim as due, cp. *Oth.* i. 3. 188, "so much duty as my mother show'd To you, ... So much I *challenge* that I may profess Due to the Moor my lord."

33. **dread-bolted**, armed with the terrible bolt; the thunderbolt of Jove, the "thunder-stone" of *J. C.* i. 3. 49.

35. **cross lightning**, forked lightning; cp. *J. C.* i. 3. 50, "when the *cross* blue *lightning* seem'd to open The breast of heaven." Walker thinks **lightning** is here a trisyllable, and would accent **perdu** on the former syllable, giving instances of that accentuation in old plays: **poor perdu**, like one of a forlorn hope. The term *enfans perdus* was commonly used of those sent on a forlorn hope, a desperate attack. Moberly doubts whether the word here means more than simply 'poor lost one.'

36. **With this thin helm**, with no better protection to his head.

36-8. **Mine ... fire**, cp. above, iii. 7. 62-4; **should have stood Against**, should have been allowed a place near: **fain**, glad, contented.

39. **To hovel thee**, to shelter yourself in a hovel: **rogues**, Walker thinks the word here means vagrant only.

40. **short**, and so short as not to allow of its being used as a covering, as longer straw might be. Furness says "it is difficult to attach any meaning to 'short' that seems appropriate here; the word must be a misprint." With Moberly, he conjectures 'dirt' to be the real reading.

41. **wonder**, wonderful; Wright compares Bacon's use of 'reason' for 'reasonable,' and 'danger,' l. 79 below, for 'dangerous.'

42. **Had ... all**, had not perished entirely; **all**, used adverbially; for **concluded**, used intransitively, cp. *Cymb.* v. 5. 32, "her life, Which, being cruel to the world, *concluded* Most cruel to herself."

47, 8. **that mine ... lead**, so that my tears as they fall burn my cheeks like, etc.; for the omission of *so*, see Abb. § 283.

50. **far wide**, *sc.* from the mark, the purpose; his wits are still wandering greatly; cp. *M. A.* iv. 1. 63, "Is my lord well, that he does speak so *wide*?" *i.e.* so strangely.

52. **Fair daylight**? am I alive and in enjoyment of the daylight?

53. **abused**, "strangely imposed upon by circumstances; in a strange mist of uncertainty" (Johnson).

60. **fond**, *i.e.* foolish.

61. **not an hour ... less**, because these words are contradictory of those immediately preceding them, Steevens, Reynolds, and Ritson would eject them. As Hudson justly remarks, though they are nonsense, "the nonsense of them, indicating, as it does, some remains of Lear's disorder, is the very reason why they should be retained."

65. **mainly**, completely, thoroughly.

66. **skill**, wit, discernment, apprehension.

67. **these garments**, see above, ll. 21, 2.

68. **lodge**, lie, dwell.

75. **some cause**, not to love me, and so to treat me cruelly.

77. **abuse**, deceive.

79. **kill'd**, destroyed, put an end to: **danger**, dangerous.

80. **To make ... lost**, to make all that has passed during his interval of madness plain or smooth to him; so to relate the events of the interval as to leave nothing which may jar against and be a stumbling-block to his mind; it seems better to take **even** as an adjective; cp. *A. Y. L.* v. 4. 25, "from hence I go To make these doubts all *even*."

82. **Till further settling**, till his mind becomes more calm; cp. *W. T.* iv. 4. 482, "till the fury of his highness *settle*"; v. iii. 72, "No *settled* senses of the world can match The pleasure of that madness."

83. **bear with me**, be patient with me.

88. **conductor ... people**, leader of his forces.

92. **Report is changeable**, rumours on the subject vary: **to look about**, to be cautious in what we do.

94. **arbitrement**, decision in the matter, result; cp. *H. V.* iv. 1. 168, "if it come to the *arbitrement* of swords:" **like**, likely.

96, 7. **My point ... fought**, the object and end I have in view will be attained or lost according as we win or lose this battle.

ACT V. SCENE I.

1. **Know ... hold**, ascertain of the duke whether the plans he last formed hold good, are to be carried out.

2, 3. **Or whether ... course**, or whether anything has occurred to make him think it advisable to change them.

4. **self-reproving**, finding fault with the plans he has made: **bring ... pleasure**, bring me word of what he has definitely determined.

5. **man**, servant: **miscarried**, come to some harm.

6. **'Tis to be doubted**, there is good reason to fear so (*sc.* from his being so long in returning).

7. **the goodness ... you**, the honour I intend to do you, to confer upon you (*sc.* by marrying him).

9. **In honour'd love**, in all honourable love, as far as I may do so consistently with honour.

10. **I never ... her**, I shall never be able to bear her, bear the sight of her, if you are too friendly with her; Delius explains, "I shall never suffer her to be so intimate with you."

11. **Fear me not**, do not have any fears of me being too intimate with her.

12. **She ... husband**, see, here she comes with her husband.

13. **that**, it seems doubtful whether this is the conjunction or the demonstrative.

14. **Should ... me**, should be able to estrange Edmund from me.

15. **loving**, dear: **be-met**, Abbott, § 438, says, "in participles, *be-* like other prefixes, is often redundant, and seems to indicate an unconscious want of some substitute for the old participial prefix."

17. **the rigour of our state**, the harshness of our rule.

18. **to cry out**, to complain loudly.

20, 1. **It toucheth ... king**, it affects us in being an invasion of our country, not because it emboldens, gives courage to, the king; Wright and Furness take **France** as the nominative to **holds**: **with others**, as well as others besides the king.

22. **make oppose**, cause to rise in arms against us.

23. **Why is this reason'd?** what is the use of this discussion?

25. **particular**, private, personal.

26. **Are not ... here**, are not the matters we have to consider now.

27. **the ancient of war**, the veterans skilled in military affairs.

28. **I shall**, for *shall* with the first person, see Abb. § 318.

31. **convenient**, fitting that you should.

32. **I know the riddle**, I see through your veiled purpose; *sc.* that of preventing her from being alone with Edmund.

33. **had speech**, condescended to speak.

39. **avouched**, formally stated.

39-41. **If you ... ceases**, if you fall in the battle, you will have

done with worldly affairs, and the plots now laid against you will necessarily come to an end; for **of**, = as regards, see Abb. § 173: **Fortune love you**, cp. *Cor.* i. 5. 21, 2, "Now, the fair goddess, *Fortune, Fall deep in love with thee.*"

42. **forbid it**, forbidden to stay while you read it. Edgar is afraid of having questions put him which would lead to his discovery.

45. **o'erlook**, read over.

47. **guess**, estimate.

48. **By diligent discovery**, obtained by diligent scouts; cp. *Macb.* v. 4. 6, "thereby shall we shadow The numbers of our host and make *discovery* Err in report of us."

48, 9. **but your ... you**, but you have not a minute to lose; **your haste**, the haste which you must make.

49. **We will ... time**, I will show myself ready to welcome the occasion; not give it a tardy welcome, but go forth to meet it as a guest one is anxious to see.

51. **jealous**, suspicious; cp. *J. C.* i. 2. 71, "And be not *jealous* on me, gentle Brutus"; and frequently elsewhere in Shakespeare.

56, 7. **And hardly ... alive**, and there will be little hope of my carrying out my game with success so long as her husband, etc. "In the phraseology of the card-table to *set up a side* was to become partners in a game; to *pull* or *pluck down a side* was to occasion its loss by ignorance or treachery; and to *carry out a side* was to carry out the game with success" (Dyce, *Gloss.*).

57, 8. **Now then ... battle**, for the present I will make use of his support in the matter of the battle.

60. **taking off**, a euphemism for 'murder'; cp. *Macb.* i. 7. 20, "The deep damnation of his *taking-off*."

62, 3. **The battle ... pardon**, the battle being over, and they being in our power, they shall never live to receive his pardon. Abbott, § 411, says this is a confusion of constructions between '*let* the battle *be* done, *and* they,' and 'the battle (being) done, they,' etc.

63, 4. **for my state ... debate**, probably Johnson is right in taking **for** as = as for my state, **Stands on**, seemingly here to be used impersonally, it stands on me; for which construction, see Abb. § 204.

SCENE II.

1, 2. **take ... host**, let the shelter of this tree give you welcome; try to find comfort in the shelter of this tree.

8. **a man ... here**, this spot will do well enough for dying on.

9. **What, ... again?** what, are you again giving way to thoughts of suicide?

9, 10. **Men ... hither**, men must reconcile themselves to the manner of their death as of their birth.

11. **Ripeness is all**, the one thing needful is that they should be prepared for it; cp. *Haml.* v. 2. 234, "the readiness is all": **And that's true too**, you are right, that also is true, as well as what I said just now, viz. **a man ... here**; for **and** in this confirmatory sense, see Abb. § 97.

SCENE III.

1. **good guard**, let good guard be kept over them.

2, 3. **Until ... them**, until the will of those my superiors who are to determine their fate is known; for **their**, as an antecedent to the relative, see Abb. § 218; **first** is redundant; **censure**, see note on iii. 5. 2, above.

4. **with best meaning**, with the best intentions.

6. **out-frown**, frown down: cp. *K. J.* v. 1. 49, "Threaten the threatener and out-face the brow Of bragging horror."

7. **these daughters ... sisters**, these women who call themselves your daughters and my sisters, but who have shown but little of what is filial or sisterly.

13. **gilded**, gay-coloured.

14, 5. **and we 'll talk ... out**, and we will talk with them too about who is in favour, who is out of favour; which party is in power, which in the cold shade of opposition; cp. *Cor.* i. 1. 195-9, "They 'll sit by the fire, and presume to know What 's done i' the Capitol; who's like to rise, Who thrives and who declines; side factions and give out Conjectural marriages; making parties strong And feebling such as stand not in their liking."

16, 7. **And take ... spies**, and take upon us to penetrate the most secret motives by which human actions are governed, as if we were spies sent for that purpose by God: **wear out**, outlive.

18. **packs and sects**, combinations and parties.

19. **That ebb ... moon**, that have no more stability than the tides which are governed by the moon.

21. **throw incense**, *i.e.* show their approval; consecrate as the priest consecrated the victim by sprinkling him with incense. **Have I caught thee?** here **caught** indicates the eagerness with which he has found her again.

22. **He that parts ... heaven**, *i.e.* nothing less than the will of heaven shall be sufficient to part us.

23. **And fire ... foxes**, as foxes are smoked out of their holes. Steevens compares Harrington's translation of Ariosto, "Ev'n as a foxe, whom smoke and fire doth fright, So as he dare not in the ground remaine, Bolts out, and through the smoke and fires he flieth Into the tarier's (*i.e.* terrier's) mouth, and there he dieth."

25. **note**, the warrant for the execution of Lear and Cordelia.

26. **One step ... thee**, I have obtained for you one step of promotion.

30. **Does not ... sword**, would be out of place in a sword, whose function is to slay; cp. *A. C.* iii. 1. 27-9, "Thou hast, Ventidius, that (*sc.* intelligence) Without the which a soldier, and his sword, Grants scarce distinction"; also *Cor.* i. 4. 53.

30, 1. **thy great ... question**, the weighty business upon which you are to be employed is one which cannot be discussed; **question**, as frequently in Shakespeare, for discourse, conversation.

32. **Or thrive ... means**, or seek for some one else to advance your interests; do not expect any help from me.

33. **write happy**, account yourself fortunate; cp. *A. W.* ii. 3. 67, "And *writ* as little beard"; ii. 3. 208, "I must tell thee, sirrah, I *write* man; to which title age cannot bring thee."

34. **carry it so**, execute the business in the way; "so that it may appear that Cordelia slew herself" (Moberly).

36. **I cannot ... oats**, I am not a mere beast of burden, like a horse; referring to the word **carry** in a literal sense.

37. **If it ... do 't**, cp. *Macb.* i. 7. 46, "*Macb.* I dare do all that may become a man; Who dares do more is none. *Lady Macb.* What beast was 't, then, That made you break this enterprise to me?"

38. **strain**, disposition as due to descent; cp. *M. A.* ii. 1. 394, "he is of a noble *strain*, of approved valour and confirmed honesty." In *Per.* iv. 3. 24, we have the word of descent, race, in contrast with disposition, "I do shame to think of what a noble *strain* you are, And of how coward a spirit."

39. **And fortune ... well**, and fortune gave you a good opportunity of showing your spirit.

40. **opposites**, opponents, adversaries; cp. *Cor.* ii. 2. 23; *Haml.* v. 2. 62.

42, 3. **As we shall ... determine**, according as we shall find is consistent with their deserts and our safety.

45. **To some ... guard**, to some confinement with a guard set to keep watch.

46. **Whose age**, seeing that his age; for *who*, = and he, for he, etc., see Abb. § 263.

47. **the common bosom**, the sympathy of the people at large.

48. **our impress'd lances**, "the lancemen whom we have hired by giving them press-money" (Steevens); see note on iv. 6. 87.

48, 9. **in our ... them**, into the eyes of us who, etc. For **our** as an antecedent to the relative, see Abb. § 218.

52. **your session**, your court to try the prisoners taken.

54. **the best quarrels**, quarrels however just their cause.

56, 7. **The question ... place**, this is not the place or time to decide the fate of, etc.

57. **by your patience**, if you will pardon my saying so; with your permission.

58. **but a ... war**, only as one who in the matter of this war, in reference to the circumstances of this war, is subordinate to my command.

59. **brother**, equal in authority: **That 's as ... him**, whether he is to be looked upon as your inferior, or as your equal, depends upon the position I choose to give him; *i.e.* if I choose to make him my representative and invest him with the command of my forces, he will be your equal.

60. **our pleasure**, my will in the matter: **demanded**, asked.

61. **Ere ... far**, ere you said so much on the subject.

62. **Bore ... person**, was commissioned to represent me and my authority.

63, 4. **The which ... brother**, and this oneness with me may justly assert his footing of equality with you; the fact that there was nothing of dependency in his relations to me may, etc. For **immediacy**, cp. ii. *H. IV.* iv. 4. 42, "My due from thee is this imperial crown, Which, as *immediate* from thy place and blood Derives itself to me."

64. **Not so hot**, do not be in such hot haste to exalt him.

65. **In his own ... himself**, his best title to eminence is his own merit.

66. **your addition**, the title you give him as your representative; **addition**, for title, something added on to grace a person; cp. above, ii. 2. 18.

66, 7. **In my rights ... best**, invested, as he is by me, with all my rights, he may claim equality with the highest in the land.

68. **That were ... you**, that would be the most that could be said of him even if he were your husband. Many editors follow the folios in giving this line to Albany.

70. **look'd but a-squint**, saw things very crookedly; **a-squint**, *i.e.* on squint, like *a-bed*, *a-foot*, etc.

71, 2. **else ... stomach**, otherwise I should resent your words with adequate spirit.

74. **the walls are thine**, I surrender myself entirely to you; I acknowledge you as my conqueror; for the same metaphor, cp. *Cymb.* ii. 1. 67, "The heavens hold firm The *walls* of thy dear honour."

75. **Witness the world**, let the whole world bear witness.

77. **The let-alone ... will**, it does not depend upon you to allow (or hinder) this.

78. **Half-blooded**, bastard; one who derives his birth, so far as it is reputable, from one parent only.

79. **Let the drum ... thine**, give the order for the drums to beat and thus show that you wield my authority.

81. **On**, on a charge of; more frequently in Shakespeare the preposition is *of*, as in *H. V.* ii. 2. 145, *R. II.* iv. 1. 151.

81, 2. **and, in thine ... serpent**, and in arresting you, this venomous creature also, decked out in her splendour. The quartos give *attaint* for **arrest**, which Staunton and Wright adopt. If the right reading, it might, I think, be explained not in its technical but its more literal sense, that of disgrace, *i.e.* as being tainted by her connection with you in your foul plots; cp. *T. C.* i. 2. 26, "there is no man hath a virtue that he hath not a glimpse of, nor any man an *attaint* but he carries some stain of it."

83. **I bar it ... wife**, I bar it on behalf of my wife who has the first claims to him as a husband.

84. **sub-contracted**, betrothed to him when I am got rid of. Shakespeare does not use *contract*, whether verb or substantive, in the commercial legal sense it now has.

85. **And I, ... bans**, and I as her husband, taking upon myself to protect her rights, forbid the bans between you and Edmund; the **bans**, or, as the word is more usually spelt, *banns*, are a proclamation made in church of the intended marriage between two persons, when any one knowing just cause or impediment against the marriage is called upon to declare it, and in doing so is said to 'forbid the banns'; see note on ii. 3. 19, above. Cp. i. *H. IV.* iv. 2. 18, "*contracted* bachelors, such as had been asked twice on the *banns*."

86, 7. **If you will ... bespoke**, if you are determined to marry, you had better make love to me, for my wife is already engaged; I have been beforehand with you in securing her alliance. Albany's whole speech is, of course, bitter irony.

87. **An interlude**! this is a pretty diversion in the scene! an **interlude** was a play performed in the intervals of a festivity.

90. **heinous**, hateful; F. *haïne*, hate.

91. **prove**, the folios give *make*, which many editors adopt, Delius explaining it by supposing the noun *proof* to be supplied from the preceding verb, a construction not uncommon in Shakespeare.

92. **thou art ... less**, that you are in no respect less.

94. **If not ... medicine**, if you are not, there is no trust to be put in medicine; she having administered poison to her sister.

95. **what ... is**, whoever in the world he may be.

97. **Call ... trumpet**, make proclamation by the sound of your trumpet; unless **trumpet** is here used, as often in Shakespeare, for trumpeter.

98. **who not?** *i.e.* on any who may appear to answer my challenge.

101-3. **Trust ... discharge**, it is no use your summoning a herald; you have no one to trust to but yourself, for your soldiers, all of whom were engaged by me, have by me been discharged; for **Took**, see Abb. § 343.

108. **of quality or degree**, of birth or rank.

109. **maintain upon**, maintain by combat with.

111. **he is ... defence**, he is ready boldly to defend himself; a formal conclusion to a proclamation of this nature.

115, 6. **Ask him ... trumpet**, "this is according to the ceremonials of the trial by combat in cases criminal. 'The Appellant and his procurator first come to the gate [*i.e.* of the barriers] ... The Constable and Marshall demand by voice of herald, what he is, and why he comes so arrayed' Selden's *Duello*" (Blakeway).

117. **and why you answer**, Abb. § 382, would remove the note of interrogation in this and the next line, understanding 'I ask' before **your name**; otherwise we must understand '**do**' after **why**.

119. **canker-bit**, eaten away as by the canker-worm; a worm that preys upon blossoms; **canker**, another form of *cancer*.

121. **to cope**, to meet in battle; cp. *T. C.* i. 2. 34, "he yesterday *coped* Hector in the battle"; the word literally means 'to bargain with.'

122. **What's he**, rather more indefinite than 'who is he?' **speaks for**, answers for when he is challenged.

124. **if my speech ... heart**, if the accusations I am about to utter are undeserved; if the heart of him whom I am about to

denounce, conscious of its own nobility, is wounded by my words.

126, 7. **It is ... protest,** "here I draw my sword. Behold it is the privilege or right of my profession *to draw* it against a traitor. I protest, therefore, etc. It is not the charge itself, but the *right of bringing* the charge and maintaining it with his sword, which Edgar calls the privilege of his profession" (Malone). For **Behold, it is,** Moberly suggests 'I hold it as,' *i.e.* "I hold here my sword, to which I am entitled by honourable birth, as well as by my oath and profession of knighthood"; which seems very plausible.

128. **Maugre,** in spite of; O. F. *malgre,* ill will, displeasure.

129. **victor,** victorious: **fire-new,** brand-new, just fresh from the mint.

134. **To the descent ... foot,** to the very lowest part of your body, yea, even to the dust beneath your foot.

135. **toad-spotted,** your soul spotted with treason as thickly as the body of a toad is with blotches of colour; with the further notion of the poisonousness formerly ascribed to toads: **Say thou,** if you should say.

136. **my best spirits,** all the courage I have in me: **bent,** determined.

137. **whereto I speak,** to which my words will reach.

139. **In wisdom,** if I thought of prudence; it not being obligatory upon him to meet in combat one of inferior rank.

141. **And that,** and since that: **some say,** some evidence; an abbreviation of *assay,* test, trial.

142. **What safe and nicely,** what if I merely thought of my safety and stood rigidly upon the punctilio of duelling; the adverbial termination in **safely** seems to belong equally to **safe: delay,** *sc.* till it had been proved that you were my equal in rank.

145. **o'erwhelm,** crush down with the weight of.

146-8. **Which ... ever,** and since these charges of treason and falsehood are scarcely felt by you, my sword shall quickly make a passage for them to your heart, where they shall find a final resting-place.

149. **Save him, save him!** Theobald would give these words to Goneril, and Walker and Halliwell agree with him: **practice,** a plot.

152. **cozen'd and beguiled,** cheated and tricked out of your life; **cozen'd,** from "F. *cousiner,* 'to claim kindred for advantage, or particular ends; as he, who to save charges in travelling, goes from house to house, as *cosin* to the honour of every one';

Cotgrave. So in modern French *cousiner* is 'to call cousin, to sponge, to live upon other people; Hamilton and Legros. The change of meaning from 'sponge' to 'beguile' or 'cheat' was easy" (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*).

153. **Hold, sir,** take this paper in your hands; said to Edmund.

155. **No tearing, lady,** keep your hands off, I will have no tearing.

156. **Say, if I do,** suppose I do recognize the paper.

158. **Ask me ... know,** cp. Iago's last words, *Oth.* v. 2. 303, 4, "Demand me nothing; what you know, you know: From this time forth I never will speak word." Knight, however, and others, would give the words to Edmund on the ground that Goneril had already admitted her knowledge of the letter.

159. **govern,** restrain.

161. **bring it out,** unravel it, make it clear.

162. **'Tis past, ... I,** that is a thing of the past, and equally so am I.

163. **That hast ... me?** who have had the good fortune to overcome me.

164. **charity,** good will, reconciliation.

165. **no less in blood,** of equal birth with you.

169. **to plague us,** to smite us with their vengeance; cp. *A. C.* v. 2. 288-90, "I hear him mock The luck of Cæsar, which the gods give men To excuse their after-wrath."

172. **The wheel ... here,** the revolution of events is completed by my being brought here to die.

181, 2. **The bloody ... near,** to escape the consequences of the proclamation, which consequences followed so closely at my heels.

183. **That we ... die,** that makes us willing hourly to suffer pain as great as that of death; 'die the pain of death' is a kind of cognate accusative construction. The quartos give *with* for **we**, and Jennens proposed 'That with the pain of death *we'd* (*i.e.* we would) die,' a reading adopted by many editors.

186. **That very dogs,** that the very dogs, even the dogs: **habit,** dress.

187. **rings,** sockets of his eyes.

188. **new,** newly, recently.

190. **fault,** Delius takes this as = misfortune; as in *M. W.* i. 1. 95; *Per.* iv. 2. 79, "The more my *fault* To scape his hands where I was like to die," which she wishes to do.

191. **some half-hour,** about a half hour; cp. *M. V.* iii. 2. 9, "I would detain you here *some* month or two"; and see Abb. § 21.

194. **flaw'd**, already cracked by his sufferings.

195. **the conflict**, *sc.* between joy and grief.

200. **more, more woeful**, more and that of a more woeful nature; cp. *Cor.* i. 9. 32, "Of all the horses Whereof we have ta'en good and good store."

202, 3. **This would ... sorrow**, to those who are not in love with sorrow, this would seem a point beyond which suffering could not go; cp. *K. J.* iv. 1. 14-6, "when I was in France Young gentlemen would be sad as night Only for wantonness."

203-5. **but another ... extremity**, all commentators, except Wright, take **but** in an adversative sense. His explanation, which, if the text be correct, seems to me unquestionably the true one, is as follows; "it seems better to take it [**but**] as qualifying 'another,' as if Edgar said 'one more such circumstance only, by amplifying what is already too much, would add to it, and so exceed what seemed to be the limit of sorrow.'" There is, however, an awkward redundancy even with this interpretation; and I think it is possible that the words **And top extremity** were intended to replace **To amplify too much**, the lines running "but another Would make much more, and top extremity." Steevens explains, "This would have seemed a period to such as love not sorrow; but—another, *i.e.* I must add another, *i.e.* another period, another kind of conclusion to my story, such as will increase the horrors of what has already been told."

206. **big in clamour**, clamorously lamenting my father's death.

211. **threw him**, threw himself on the dead body of my father.

212. **him**, for the pronoun with **of** for the pronominal adjective, cp. *H. V.* ii. 4. 64, "The native mightiness and fate *of him*"; and see Abb. § 225.

214. **puissant**, overmastering.

218. **enemy**, used as an adjective; cp. *Cor.* iv. 4. 24, "this *enemy* town"; *A. C.* iv. 14. 71, "all the Parthian darts Though *enemy*."

219. **Improper ... slave**, such as even a slave could hardly be called upon to perform.

226. **contracted**, betrothed.

227. **Now ... instant**, are united in death.

231. **the compliment**, the ordinary greetings.

232. **very manners**, even the slightest good breeding; for **manners**, used as a singular, Wright compares *R. J.* v. 3. 213, "What manners *is* in this?"

233. **aye**, for ever; from "Icel. *ei*, ever + A.S. *á*, ever"... (Skeat, *Ety. Dict.*).

241. **for life**, to be allowed sufficient time to save Lear and Cordelia.

242. **Despite ... nature**, in opposition to my naturally cruel disposition.

243. **brief**, quick; cp. *T. C.* iv. 5. 237, "Thou art too *brief*."

243, 4. **for my writ ... Cordelia**, for I have issued a writ for the execution of, etc.

246. **who**, for the omission of the inflection, see Abb. § 274: **Who hath the office?** who has been commissioned to carry out your order?

247. **Thy ... reprieve**, the sign agreed upon in case of a reprieve.

250. **for thy life**, if you value your life.

254. **fordid**, destroyed; **for-**, the intensive prefix.

255. **defend**, forbid.

261. **stain**, blur with moisture: **stone**, of which formerly mirrors were often made, the 'pebbles' of modern eye-glasses.

262. **the promised end**, the predicted end of all things, the day of judgement.

263. **Or image ... horror**, or the very likeness of that dread time; cp. *Macb.* ii. 3. 83, where Macduff is rousing Donalbain and Malcolm to see their murdered father, "Shake off this downy sleep, ... And look on death itself! up, up, and see The *great doom's image*," *i.e.* a sight like that of the last day. Mason points out that the allusion is to *Mark*, xiii. 12, "Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death"; a prediction which, though referring to the destruction of Jerusalem, was commonly understood of the end of the world: **Fall, and cease**, Capell's explanation of these difficult words seems to be the best, viz. "Fall, heaven! and let things cease!" Delius supposes Edgar and Albany to continue Kent's train of thought, and takes **Fall** and **cease** as substantives in apposition to **that horror**; Kent asks, "Is this the promised end of the world?" "Or the image of that horror?" asks Edgar. "Of that fall and cease?" continues Albany.

264. **This feather stirs**, *sc.* with her breath; cp. ii. *H. IV.* iv. 5. 31, 2, said by the Prince when watching his father whom he supposes to be dying, "By his gates of breath There lies a downy *feather* which *stirs* not."

265. **a chance**, a happiness; = mischance, *Macb.* ii. 3. 96, "Had I but died an hour before this *chance*, I had lived a blessed time."

269. **I might ... her**, *i.e.* if you had not distracted my attention.

273. **a-hanging**, in the act of hanging; literally *on* hanging.

275. **biting falchion**, keen-edged sword; **falchion**, properly a curved sword, Lat. *falcio*, a sickle-shaped sword, from *falx*, a sickle.

277. **crosses**, troubles, misfortunes: **spoil**, weaken, disable.

278. **not o' the best**, not so clear-sighted as they might be.

279, 80. **If fortune ... behold**, if fortune should speak of two persons, one of whom she loved, while she hated the other, and were to brag of her power, we should recognize the results of her hatred in the case of one, *sc.* Lear. It does not seem to me that the one loved by fortune is indicated at all, or that Kent's speech has any reference to himself.

281. **This ... sight**, these eyes of mine are very dull. Jennens conjectures *light* for *sight*, and Grant White and Collier follow him.

286. **I 'll ... straight**, I 'll soon see if it is as you say.

287. **your first ... decay**, the first beginnings of your altered fortunes; Kent continues his speech without noticing Lear's remark. For **first of difference**, cp. *Macb.* iii. 1. 118, "Against my *near'st of life*"; v. 2. 11, "their *first of manhood.*"

289. **Nor ... else**, again Kent goes on without noticing Lear's words, and says 'I and no one else.' The chief objection to this is that the Fool also followed Lear, but perhaps the Fool's services are hardly to be considered as material; and **the very man**, in l. 285, looks as if Kent left them out of account. Capell, Dyce, and Moberly follow the quartos and folios in putting a full stop after **steps**, the last paraphrasing, "Who can be 'welcome' to such a scene as this?"

291. **And ... dead**, "in despair; so that their souls are lost, without hope of salvation. The phrase is thus applied to Barnadine in *M. M.* iv. 2. 152, 'insensible of mortality and desperately mortal,' *i.e.* devoted to death without hope of salvation" (Schmidt).

293. **That we ... him**, for us to try to make him recognize us.

296. **this great decay**, the terrible disorder of the realm.

298. **this old majesty**, our venerable king.

299. **you, ... rights**, do you return to the exercise of your rights.

300. **boot**, see note on iv. 6. 200.

303. **The cup**, the bitter cup filled to the brim.

304. **my poor fool**, an affectionate term for Cordelia. Some have thought that Lear speaks literally of his beloved Fool.

308. **undo this button**, as though he were suffering from a suffocation which prevented his soul from taking its flight.

311. **Break, ... break!** Grant White is inclined to think that the quartos are right in giving these words to Lear.

313. **tough**, so hard to struggle against; with an allusion to the strain put upon those subjected to the torture of the rack.

316. **He but .. life**, his hold upon life was but a factitious one, the strength of excitement and despair.

319. **gored**, rent and wounded by divisions; literally pierced as by a spear, A.S. *gár*, a spear.

320. **a journey**, *sc.* to the next world; I have not long to live.

321. **My master**, Lear.

322, 3. **The weight ... say**, we must yield to the heavy burden of woe that the time has cast upon us, and give way to our natural feelings without troubling ourselves as to what sentiments we ought to utter. The folios give the speech to Edgar, to whom in some respects it seems more proper. Schmidt thinks that the two first lines might perhaps be given to Edgar, the two last to Albany.

325. **Shall never ... long**, of this obscure line Moberly says, "Age and fulness of sorrow have been the same thing to the unhappy; his life has been prolonged into times so dark in their misery and so fierce in their unparalleled ingratitude and reckless passion, that even if we live as long as he has (which will hardly be), our existence will never light on days as evil as those which he has seen." If it were not that the play would end abruptly with Kent's speech, these last lines would look like a player's tag.

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